Prabuddha Bharata

OR AWAKENED INDIA

*   *   *   *



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

"Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

Editorial Office:

MAYAVATI, ALMORA, HIMALAYAS

Publication Office:

4, WELLINGTON LANE, CALCUTTA

Subscription : Inland Rs. 4
Foreign : $3 or 11sh.

Inland : Single Copy
Annas Seven.

INDEX

TO

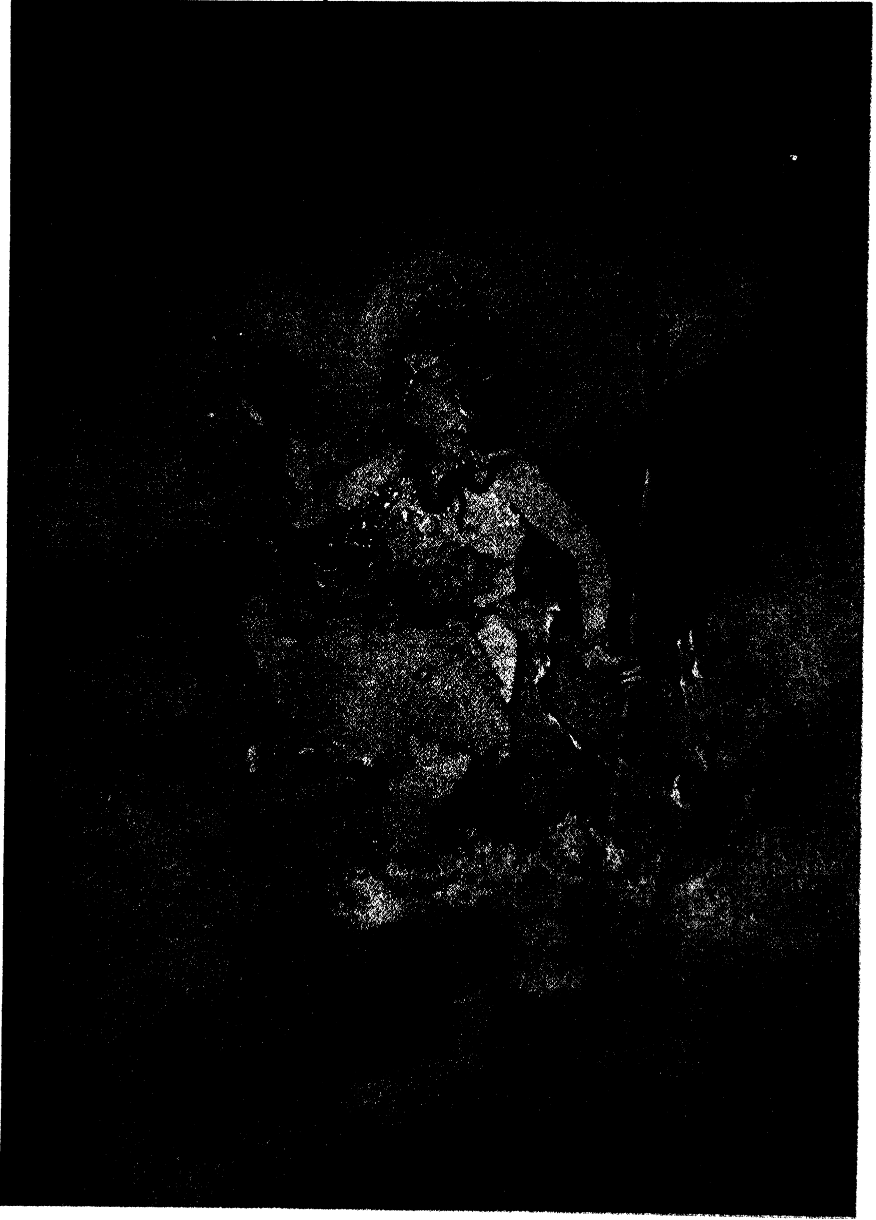
PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX (JANUARY-DECEMBER, 1944)

Page

Pa[illegible]

Editor : Swami Gambhirananda



NATARAJA

Nandalal Bose

By Courtesy Prabashi Press

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX. *JANUARY, 1944* No. 1



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

BELIEF IN THE DESCENT OF GOD

By Swami Saradananda

A comparative study reveals a clear distinction between the spiritual modes and beliefs of India and the other countries. It is discovered that, from time immemorial, India has been addressing herself unreservedly to the realization of God, soul, the next world, and such other supernatural things, which she regarded as irrefutable verities, the direct perception or experience of which is the *summum bonum* of individual and national achievement. All her efforts have for ever been coloured by a wonderful spirituality.

If we search for the root of this unquenchable thirst for superconscious realities, we come to realize that it is due to the advent, at regular intervals, of divinely gifted persons possessing direct realization. It was through constant contact with and meditation on their supernormal vision and unparalleled manifestation of power that India came to firmly believe in and be attracted by these phenomena. It was thus that, from time of yore, the national life of India came to be based on the strong foundation of spirituality, and, fixing her attention on a religion of realization as her goal, created a society and social customs that were unique and incomparable. The Indian society ordered its laws and customs with the sole purpose of enabling the Indian citizens and social units to evolve according to their natural and personal aptitudes through the performance of daily duties whereby they could become religious and achieve God-realization. It is due to the pursuit of these rules for generations that the religious fervour of India is still a living reality, and it is due to this that every man or woman in India still firmly believes that through penances, self-control, and intense longing everyone can realize and become for ever united with God who is the source of all.

It can be easily seen that the Indian religion is based on direct realization of God. A consideration of the meaning of the terms, viz, Rishi, Âpta, Adhikâri Purusha or Prakritilina Purusha, under which we have been classifying the great

masters, the founders of religions, from the Vedic times, will make this clear to us. There can be no doubt that they came to be called by those names because of the proof they gave of their supernatural powers consequent on their realization of superconscious realities. This can be equally affirmed of one and all, from the Vedic Rishis to those who came to be known as Avatâras in the Paurânic age.

Moreover, it requires no great effort to understand that the Rishis of the Vedic age evolved into the Avatâras of God in the Paurânic age. Though the Vedic people realized that some persons had a genius for superconscious perceptions, they could not make any distinction among them as regards their power of perception, and were consequently content to classify them all under the single category of Rishis. But in time, as man's intelligence and power of discrimination developed, he realized that all the Rishis were not equally gifted: in the spiritual firmament some of them appeared bright and effulgent like the sun, some like the moon, some like bright stars, while still others were like little fire-flies. Then in trying to classify the Rishis man came to the conclusion that some of them were specially able or supremely endowed to manifest spiritual power. Thus, in the philosophical age, some Rishis came to be classed as Adhikâri Purushas, the specially gifted beings. Even such a questioner of God's existence as Kapila, the author of the Sânkhya system, could not doubt the existence of such persons; for who can ever question the validity of direct perception? It is thus that in the works of the great master Kapila and his followers, the Adhikâri Purushas find a place under the name of Prakritilinas, persons merged in Prakriti. In ascertaining the advent of such supremely endowed persons, they say, 'Though such persons, through their holiness, self-control, and such other qualities, are fully qualified to attain the highest knowledge, still, as a result of their extreme solicitousness for the good of others, they cannot, for a time, get merged in their real and eternally glorious Self; but being merged through that desire in the body of the all-powerful Prakriti, they consider her powers as their own, and being thus endowed with the six powers, they serve others for an aeon and then attain their Selfhood.'

At the end of the philosophical age in India, Bhakti-yoga came specially into prominence. The loud call of Vedanta had then induced the Indian intellect to believe in a God who is a cosmic person comprising the totality of individuals, and it had come to pin its faith on perfection of knowledge and mystic union through communion with Him. So it was not difficult to reduce the god of the Sânkhyas who is only a ruler of an aeon to a partial manifestation of that God who is a cosmic person and is by nature eternally pure, intelligent, and free. It may be inferred, too, that by a similar process, in the Paurânic age, arose the belief in Avatâras and the evolution of the supernormally gifted Vedic Rishis to the Avatârahood of God. It is clear, therefore, that India came to believe in the incarnation of God as a result of her coming face to face with persons specially endowed with spiritual power; and it was on the superconscious perception and experience of such geniuses that the strong spiritual structure of India was built step by step till it rose high like the snow-clad Himalayas to touch heaven itself. Recognizing these persons as in full possession of the acme of human aspiration, India called them Âptas, the fully realized ones, and discovering in their words the perfection of knowledge she called these the Vedas.

Another chief factor contributing to the elevation of some of the eminent Rishis to Avatârahood in India, was the adoration of Gurus, the spiritual preceptors. From the time of the Vedas and the Upanishads India's genius has been worshipping with exemplary reverence the spiritual adepts and Gurus who are transmitters of knowledge. This reverence and adoration showed the

Indians in time that a mere human being can never succeed in becoming a Guru unless superconscious divine power manifests itself through him. As a result of a comparative study of the selfishness of ordinary lives and the selfless, kind-hearted service of others by the real Gurus, men first came to worship the latter as a distinctively higher class of human beings. Gradually, with the crystallization of faith, reverence, and devotion in their hearts, the more they got evidence of the supernatural powers of the true Gurus, the more did they believe in their divinity. They realized that the help they had been praying for so long from God in His aspect as Dakshinâmurti (the Endower of Gifts) in such words as 'Rudra, protect us for ever through that benign face of Thine which is in the right,' had come to them through the Gurus: God's mercy itself stood revealed to them as power embodied in the Guru.

Again, with the advance of the human mind thus far, the time soon came when those who were the mediums for the special manifestation of that power, came to be identified with the Dakshinâmurti aspect of God, the source of all knowledge. Thus, it can be concluded that the adoration of the Guru brought into existence and helped in the growth of the belief in Avatâras. Hence, though the theory of incarnation came into lime light in the Paurânic age, there can be little doubt that its roots extend to the Vedic age. The evidences of God's glory, activity, and nature that were vouchsafed to men of the Vedic, Upanishadic, and philosophical ages, took definite shape in the Paurânic age and emerged as the belief in Avataras. Or it may be that when after attaining Samâdhi through progress in meditation on the Absolute Brahman achieved through self-control, penance, etc., man of the Upanishadic age returned to this world through the reverse process and succeeded in realizing it as the manifestation of Brahman, there appeared in his heart a love for the qualified, immanent Brahman or God, which led him on to His worship. It was then that man arrived at some definite conclusions regarding God's qualities, activities, and nature and imbibed a faith in His special descent.

It has been said before that the belief in incarnation took distinct form in the Paurânic period. Though the spiritual life of that age may not be beyond criticism, its excellence and greatness are manifestly apparent from the single fact of its discovery of the glory of incarnations, inasmuch as through this faith in Avatâras man has succeeded in comprehending the eternal disport of the qualified Brahman. From this he has understood that God, who is the source of this universe, is also his sole guide in the spiritual world, and from this he has realized that, wicked though he may be for howsoever long a period, the unsurpassable mercy of God will not allow him to follow evermore that path to destruction; but that mercy will incarnate and descend from age to age, lay open newer spiritual paths according to man's aptitude, and thus make spiritual fulfilment easier for him.

It will not be out of place here to briefly relate what is stated in the Smritis and the Purânas about the supernatural birth and life of the Avatâras in the amplitude of their unsurpassable glory. The Smritis and the Purânas say that an Avatâra is like God Himself possessed of eternal purity, intelligence, and freedom. He is never under the fetters of Karma like ordinary mortals, because there never occurs in him any selfish desire for earthly enjoyment, preoccupied as he is with the Self from his very birth: as an embodied being he addresses all his efforts to the good of others. Furthermore, as he is never under any spell of ignorance which Mâyâ extends over all, the recollection of the great deeds performed by him in his previous incarnations, are never obliterated from his mind.

It may be asked, Does such an ineradicable memory reside in his mind even from his childhood? The writers

of the Purânas say in reply that though this is latent in his mind in childhood, it is not patent then; but with the full development of his instruments, i.e., his body and mind, the recollections come to him naturally or with very little effort. This is to be understood with relation to all his activities; for with embodiment all his efforts assume a human presentation.

Thus, with the full development of the body and the mind, the Avatâra is completely aware of the mission of his life. He knows that his advent is for the re-establishment of spirituality. Moreover, the accessories necessary for the fulfilment of that mission seem to come to him unsought for in inscrutable ways. The path that is dark to ordinary eyes is brilliantly illumined to his vision; he proceeds along it without trepidation, and being himself successful he inspires others to follow it. Thus in every age is discovered by him hitherto undreamt of newer paths for the realization of the true nature of Brahman that is beyond Mâyâ and of God who is the source of all.

The writers of the Purânas not only discovered thus the qualities, functions, and nature of incarnations, they also clearly visualized the time of his advent. They say that when the eternal and universal religion declines through the ravages of time—when men, deluded by the inscrutable influence of ignorance, the child of Mâyâ, take this world and the earthly enjoyments as the be-all and end-all of life, and persuade themselves that the Self, God, salvation, and such other superconscious verities are mere figments of some poetic brains of a dreamy, ignorant, and by-gone world —when even after acquiring all kinds of earthly enjoyment and sense-pleasure through hook or crook, men fail to remove their inner want and float on the dark and interminable current of misery, wailing all the while through agony—then does God in all His glory illumine the eternal religion like the moon freed from an eclipse, and incarnating Himself out of mercy towards weak human beings, lifts them up with His own hands and sets them again on the spiritual path. Every effect must have its cause; similarly, too, God never comes down, out of His natural playfulness, unless there is need for the removal of a universal want. No sooner does such a want benumb every limb of a society, than does God's illimitable mercy crystallize and prompt Him to descend as a world teacher. It is needless to point out that it is as a consequence of repeated evidence of such spontaneous embodiment that the Paurânic writers arrived at the foregoing conclusion.

So it is evident that the omniscient incarnation who is the discoverer of a new religious path and is a world teacher, manifests himself for the fulfilment of the need of an age. This India, which is pre-eminently a spiritual country, has been repeatedly purified in various ages by holding to her heart his footsteps. And, as a matter of fact, we can see even in recent times that whenever the need of the age demands it, there is the holy advent in India of an incarnation in all his unsurpassable glory. It is well known, for instance, how a little more than four centuries ago God incarnated as Sri Krishnachaitanya Bharati who in his incomparable glory became intoxicated with the singing of the name of Hari. Has such a time come again? Has the need of the age again stirred the mercy of God, impelling Him to incarnate in poor India, bereft of all splendour and hated by foreigners though she is? The readers will realize, from a discussion of the life that we are going to delineate, that events have really moved to such a consummation. India has again been blessed by the advent of that same personality that in previous ages came as Shri Râmachandra and Shri Krishna to re-establish the eternal religion. He has again descended in response to a need of the present age.

BENGAL'S AGONY

By the Editor

I

For the past few months many parts of India have been passing through what is nothing short of a catastrophe. Of these Bombay, the Deccan States, Travancore, Cochin, and Bengal have been the most hard hit. In this article, however, we take Bengal for our study, since the facts there are more well known, and events took there the most calamitous turn. We feel no less for the sufferers in other parts of the country; but we feel that an intensive study of one province will reveal the state of things elsewhere as well.

The Parliamentary White Paper, published at the end of October last year, held out the hope that with the appearance of the Âman crop in the market, by the middle of January, Bengal will have turned the corner. No one will be happier than ourselves to see Bengal's agony at an end or at least substantially alleviated. But a consideration of the circumstances leading to the crisis and the actual state of things during the past months, leaves us cold. Nor are we alone in this pessimism. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Secretary of the All-India Muslim League and Nawab Md. Ismail Khan, Chairman of the All-India Muslim League Defence Committee, in a joint statement, which we shall have occasion to quote again, declared:

> There seems to be an impression that with the harvesting of the bumper Âman crop, most, if not all, of the troubles would be over. We do not subscribe to any such view. We feel that a catastrophe of this magnitude leaves in its wake factors which cannot be met merely by the harvesting of a bumper crop.

To people watching from a distance and depending solely on newspapers for their enlightenment, events in Bengal in the past presented a strange riddle. Bengal which had all along been considered one of the richest provinces of India, Bengal whose fields smiled with plenty, Bengal whose expanding industries employed millions from the neighbouring provinces, was suddenly in the grip of an acute famine! The White Paper asserted that the food economy of Bengal was in normal times precariously balanced and had not been able to endure the stress of both war and physical shortage. And yet those who followed the march of events with open eyes, knew that it was more a result of man's blunders and bungling than a consequence of Nature's freaks and frivolities. Not only this, they had clear fore-warnings of this calamity.

A world war had been raging for years, making huge demands on the resources of India. Food was being exported, though the sources of civilian supply had dried up or the means of transport greatly reduced. The grow-more-food drive had not given appreciable results. Burma, which supplemented the Indian grain produce, had fallen to the enemy. India had raised a huge army whose personnel consumed a good deal more than they were used to as private citizens. The country had to sustain a big foreign army, a good number of refugees from Europe and the Japanese occupied countries, as well as some war prisoners. The war industries had attracted to the towns and cities great numbers who, with their added income, made an increased demand on consumers' goods including food. For, as we have already noted, Indians, unlike other peoples, being chronically poor, eat more when they are a little better off. In addition to these reasons, there was an unprecedented inflation, making the price of consumers' goods almost prohibitive. The Parliamentary

White Paper elaborated the consequences of this last point thus :

> The agricultural population is about forty millions and the average holding in Bengal (about 3.5 acres), is one of the lowest in India. The Bengal cultivator grows chiefly for his own needs and only sells to meet his fixed liabilities and domestic needs. Rising prices enabled him to bring less of his produce to market and to eat more. The shrinkage of consumers' goods—corrugated iron for building, cloth, kerosene, utensils, etc.—and the inability to obtain silver or gold in any form, left him with still less inducement to sell his grain. Facilities for war loans and war savings are often not within his reach. These factors contributed to the difficulties of inducing a normal flow and controlling the distribution of rice.

The suggestion given here that the peasants hoarded their grains has been refuted by eye-witnesses like Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, President of the Servants of India Society. Be that as it may, the prohibitive prices of consumers' goods, due in some extent to their being diverted to defence purposes and export to the allies, left the pockets of the poor and the middle classes substantially depleted. But these were factors common .to all provinces. It has not been proved that the Bengalees are specially adept in hoarding or wreckless in spending. If, therefore, Bengal came to grief, the reasons must be sought for elsewhere, though we are ready to admit, that these were certainly *contributory factors*.

Bengal had her own special problems. Being at the frontier of Burma, which the Japanese might at any moment use as a spring-board for an attack on India, Bengal came in for greater military control than other provinces. There was first the 'denial policy', in pursuance of which rice was removed from many districts, so that the enemy might not be benefited by it. Food grains were purchased and stocked for the defence and essential services. The strict control of boats in a province where the best means of communication are the rivers and the canals, upset the machinery of distribution. The civilian population, including cultivators, was removed from many coastal areas. Some land was taken over for aerodromes and other military purposes. The expansion of industry and commerce did not benefit the Bengalee poor classes as such. For, as in pre-war days, the mill-hands and wage earners came mostly from other provinces like Behar, Orissa, Madras, and the Central Provinces. Though Bengal supplied a few thousand of men to the defence services, this was never on a scale comparable to provinces like Punjab, N. W. F., U. P., or Madras. The rise in grain prices did not benefit the peasants to any appreciable extent. For, in the first instance, the greatest share of the profits swelled the pockets of the middle men and the big merchants in the cities. The simultaneous withdrawal of grains from the market by competitive purchases by employers of labour and Government forced prices up. Besides, as pointed out by Mr. K. C. Neogi, M.L.A., the insistence of Government on the increase of jute acreage made less land available for paddy. As a consequence, though Bengal had a good crop in 1942, 1943 found her in the grip of an unparalleled distress.

II

But we have still to recount some other factors to make the picture full. Nature cannot be absolved of her share of the responsibility. The Midnapore cyclone in 1942, accompanied by tidal wave, had taken a heavy toll in life and property, and vast stretches of fertile land had been laid waste by salt water. In 1943 there was a flood in Burdwan and some parts of Midnapore, which aggravated the situation, inasmuch as it not only destroyed life, property, and the standing crop, but also breached the railway lines, thus making communication precarious at a time when that alone could solve the problem of scarcity.

A more regrettable and potent factor was the political and administrative condition. It is a delicate question. Prudence dictates that we should refrain from apportioning blame. But huma-

nity urges that the truth be told. The difficulty, however, is about ascertaining the truth. Instead, therefore, of entering into partisan politics we shall indicate in brief the tendencies that were at work. In March 1943 a ministry, that for the time-being enjoyed the confidence of the provincial assembly, had to leave office. The new ministry could not carry with it large and influential sections of the house. Besides, the opposition made charges against its food policy, which shook the confidence of the people. Due to administrative difficulties, the Government could not state the actual food position. Even in normal times the province has a shortage (about 5 p.c. according to some). But public utterances by responsible people created the wrong impression that it had enough food though this had gone underground. Actual search did not unearth any appreciable quantity, and an absolute shortage had to be admitted. Meanwhile much valuable time had been lost and prices had shot high like rockets, thereby utterly demolishing all confidence in public utterances. And though assurances were given of imports from other provinces and foreign countries, people, who could afford to release a few bushels out of charitable consideration, to enable others to tide over the difficulty for the time-being, became increasingly wary. Nor was any example set by releasing stocks held by big firms. To make confusion worse confounded, when food came in, many loopholes were discovered in the machinery of distribution, so that food took a long time to reach, if at all, the people mostly in need. Prices began to soar higher and higher. And though it was given out for a time that with the harvesting of the autumn (Aush) crop the situation would improve, it actually deteriorated. Things came to such a pass that H. E. the Viceroy Lord Wavell had to step in at the end of October and ask the military authorities to help the Bengal Government by diverting stock and arranging transport and distribution.

We shall not stop to consider the constitutional responsibility of the provincial, central, and British Governments. Suffice it to say that if political foresight and administrative efficiency in Britain could prevent the price of essential foodstuffs from rising more than 25 or 50 p.c., there is no reason why the same thing could not have been done in Bengal, where the price of rice shot up from Rs. 5/- per maund to Rs. 50/- or even Rs. 100/- at places. The poignancy of the situation can be well realized when we remember that Britain, with her scanty pre-war arable land and a predominantly urban and industrial population, could easily maintain herself against all odds whereas Bengal, in spite of her fertile land and a vast agricultural population, miserably collapsed. Food became scarce even at prohibitive rates. For want of supply rationing could not be introduced in any appreciable scale. Control of rates, without administrative guarantee of enforcement, drove food away from the market.

The anxiety of provincial Governments for their own citizens contributed not a little to the worsening of the situation. Thus in the Parliamentary White Paper it was complained that Punjab did not part with its promised quota of wheat with sufficient alacrity and Sind tried to swell its revenue at the expense of the deficit provinces. In fairness, it must be stated, however, that Punjab complained that the Centre and Bengal made profits on their rice deals and that wheat could not be removed as speedily as it came to the railway yards.

A more complicated and intangible factor was the moral one. Commercial firms were more concerned with their own profits than the fate of a dying race. Prices rose through competitive buying and stocks were moved about irrespective of the needs of localities. The wholesale dealers and the retail sellers cared as little for the people. If the Government failed to perfect the machinery of distribution, the merchants did all in their power to complicate the

situation. Black markets carried on a lucrative trade, and even honest people were forced to get their food from them. Before the 'controlled shops,' the poor people stood in queues for hours together, while the riff-raffs of society elbowed themselves into advantageous positions and deprived hungry mouths of their much coveted morsels.

III

It must be said to the credit of our countrymen that no sooner were they aware of the actual state of things they came to Bengal's help with alacrity. Bengal's agony stirred to the depth the hearts of benevolent people all over India. Money poured in from all quarters. Even South African Indians sent in their quota. Charitable societies started relief works. The Bengal Government established 3,621 kitchens and subsidized 1,247 more at which 20,78,886 persons got free food. (Figures published on October 31). There were also some destitute homes and orphanages run by the Government and the public. But the misery was so widespread that all these palliatives seemed like tinkering with a problem that appeared at times to baffle all human endeavour. The Muslim League leaders quoted earlier, said,

from what we have seen, . . . at least 20 p.c. of the population is living under most pitiable conditions.

We must remember that 20 p.c. in a population of about sixty millions means twelve millions! Apart from the magnitude of the problem and the scarcity of food, transport presented a real difficulty. And although food began to reach Calcutta by trains and ships, district relief centres had often to be closed for want of supply. Besides, the gruel distributed at the Government kitchens once daily was considered by many responsible leaders to be insufficient to keep body and soul together. And in almost all cases such philanthropic help came very late. Bodies emaciated by long starvation collapsed in thousands in spite of gruel supply and medical aid. In the absence of a well thought out plan, adequate supply, and transport facilities, both Governmental and private relief often followed death rather than forestalled it. Thus, relief for a time was confined to Calcutta before it was realized that the countryside was being depopulated. There were complaints that the charity of the city public attracted destitutes from all around and endangered its health. So schemes were formulated for their repatriation, though execution was long delayed. There were hundreds of orphans loitering about the city streets, but there was no suitable arrangement for their reception. Some few of these were sent to other provinces. This served only as an eye-opener to outsiders as to the actual state of things in Bengal, without even touching the fringe of the problem.

In addition to efforts within the province and in India by official and non-official organizations, funds were started by semi-official bodies in India and in London. Foreign countries like America, Eire, China, Canada, and South Africa gave substantial help. But truth to say, such help came rather late in the day. And it would seem that the famine had raged for months before the gravity of the situation was realized in higher quarters. Determined Governmental measures calculated to stamp out the famine seem to have been inaugurated towards the end of October when food began to be imported from other parts of the Empire. The new Viceroy announced soon after his arrival that one of his main duties would be to eliminate the misery of the people, and with characteristic expeditiousness he instructed the military to help the Bengal Government in transporting and distributing food and removing the destitutes to reception camps.

It seems strange that, in a civilized world, such a man-made misery should have dragged on for so many months. But for this prolongation of the agony, bad supply of news was not a little responsible. Thus in the early days, when

the distress was just entering into its acute stage, it was rumoured in Delhi that the situation was being over-dramatized. And even months later, the figures of death presented to the London public were utterly baseless and underrated. In the absence of true information, people in India condemned the Bengal Government as slow and inefficient inasmuch as they did not introduce rationing and declare the province a famine area. People hardly realized that it was quite beyond the means of a provincial Government to tackle the problem successfully. The Bengal Government had to admit that with inadequate supply neither rationing nor the enforcement of the Famine Code was a possibility. The situation was highly paradoxical. The Bengal public had been crying for rationing from the beginning of 1943, and there were a Famine Code and a Famine Fund. But man's premonition and law-givers' foresight staggered before stark reality. Human folly was too strong for human ingenuity.

Another factor which indirectly contributed to the distress in Bengal was the famine raging in some other provinces and states. Bijapur in Bombay had just passed through a famine. Malabar was in the grip of an acute food shortage succeeded by epidemic cholera, which between them carried away many. Mr. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society once estimated that there must have been about 2,000 to 4,000 orphans there. Some parts of the Madras Presidency were also passing through famine conditions, and parts of Orissa caused anxiety. But excepting Malabar nowhere was the distress so intense as in Bengal, and nowhere was it so widespread and prolonged. Bengal's agony was not localized; it could be met with almost at every door.

IV

And what was the actual condition in Bengal? It is a real tragedy that true statistics were never available, and at times the newspapers had to be over-

cautious for fear of censorship, so that even the Committee of the Calcutta branch of the European Association was forced to declare that it

> cannot avoid a feeling of anxiety which results to a large extent from a lack of authentic information or authentic figures as to mortality from starvation or as to the food supply position.

Things being as they are, we cannot do better than present some stray facts which the readers may correlate as best as they can. The Secretary of State for India Mr. L. S. Amery said in answer to a question in Parliament,

> It is estimated that between August 15 and October 16 about 8,000 persons died in Calcutta from causes directly or indirectly due to malnutrition. No reliable figures are available for the country districts; but conditions in south-east and south-west Bengal are, I fear, worse than in Calcutta. I have no reliable figures for the whole of India.

It may be remarked in passing that the *Statesman* of Calcutta, a British owned newspaper, estimated in the beginning of October that the weekly mortality in Bengal must have been well over ten or twelve thousand. Others put it still higher. Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru at a Press Conference at Delhi (1.11.43) said that the death rate must be 50,000 per week.

The Viceroy of India toured at the end of October parts of the Contai Subdivision in Midnapore, which was one of the worst affected areas. The spokesman of the Viceregal party stated in part:

> The actual starvation deaths in the subdivision, coupled with those directly due to the food crisis, were put by the sub-divisional authorities at about 6,000 since August. It was stated that there was a certain amount of bowel diseases. . . . It has a population of rather under 800,000. The number of people now receiving free cooked rice, in most cases once daily, is rather over 312,000, and in addition rather over 88,000 are in receipt of dry grain doles. . . . In Contai town the viceregal party first visited the college which, with the exception of the hostel had been turned into an initial reception station. There were 525 patients, nearly all of them in very bad condition. . . . Nearly all the patients came from the immediate neighbourhood of Contai and were not vagrants who had drifted in from long distances. . . . At the registra-

tion office in Contai where land transactions were recorded, it was clear that petty sales and mortgages of land were on the increase since July. . . . In Contai they could observe another index of distress. Small dealers were buying ornaments and utensils on the roadside.

To these official statements may be added some reports of non-officials who made personal tours of inspection. Mrs. Vijaylakshmi Pandit, President of the All-India Women's Conference and an erstwhile minister of the U. P. Government said in October,

Men, women, and children in the last degrees of emaciation pour in an unending stream into the city and districts from the villages. Haggard, half-naked women, worn out for lack of food, carrying rickety babies with dried up limbs and old wrinkled faces ; small children, with bloated bellies and ribs standing out, jaunt against their lean and thin legs which can hardly support their weight ; men in every stage of starvation, walking skeletons most of them.

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru wrote :

I do not want to exaggerate, but I cannot help saying that Contai seemed to be a city of the dead. . . . In the villages that I saw, the position was even worse than in the Contai town.

The sufferings of the villagers, particularly women and children (in East Bengal), bring tears to one's eyes. Desertions of wives by husbands and of children by their parents are increasing, and smaller cultivators and landless labourers are selling their lands and houses in order to have a few rupees to buy food with . . . . I find that the need for cloth is almost as great as for food. . . . Quinine is almost not available.

The League leaders' views were :

Medical arrangements are hopelessly inadequate. . . . There are no convalescent homes worth the name . . . . the destitutes in their devitalized condition are left to lie about on the pavement, streets, and overbridges on railway stations.

Mr. Syed Badrudduja, Mayor of Calcutta, reported after touring the Murshidabad District :

The quantity of food per head in the gruel kitchens is far too insufficient for a single meal a day, and the number served therein are only a small fraction of the unfortunate destitutes, middle class families apart. . . . The prime need of the moment is not merely food grains . . . but also quinine, cholera vaccine, and clothing.

Mr. D. F. Karaka, special correspondent of the *Bombay Chronicle*, wrote from Madaripur (in Faridpur) :

Men have been known to sell all their belongings, even their children. Prostitutes are buying little girls with an eye to the future.

Hunger drives men mad ! They not only sell children but also change religion, eat carrion, and commit suicide ! The daily papers reported innumerable such cases.

V

Enough has been written to give a partial picture of the gruesome condition in Bengal up to the end of October. Those who have studied the course of events during the past few months and fully realize the significance of the facts presented above, will hesitate to believe that the appearance in the market of the winter (Âman) crop will end the agony. Nor will any right thinking man see the need of slackening his energy in January. The traces of such a calamity takes long to eradicate, for it is not a superficial scratch but a deep festering wound. It is a mistake to think that with the increase of supply the misery will automatically stop. Increased supply will not necessarily increase buying power and ruined vitality will not be easily restituted. Think of the millions of destitutes who have sold their hearths and homes and have been permanently rooted out of the soil ! Think of the thousands of orphans loitering helplessly ! Think of the poorer middle classes who, out of shame, are somehow hiding their destitution ! And think of the innumerable families that have broken up and scattered, unable to bear the strain of the distress ! Then, there will be tens of thousands of emaciated people who will require sustenance and medical aid for a long time. There is possibility, too, of an acute shortage of agricultural labour due to death and devitalization. Besides, diseases like cholera, dysentery, malaria, etc., which are already rampant, are likely to tax the province's resources for a long time. And who knows what winter has in store for the naked millions ?

Indeed, it will require unremitting

superhuman power to put Bengal again on her feet. Bengal's immediate problems are not those of post-war planning, which, pressing though they are, pale into insignificance beside questions of post-famine rehabilitation. The Government and the people must be up and doing to find out ways and means for preventing this calamity leaving any permanent scar. They have to remember that the causes that brought about this catastrophe may lie dormant, though the Âman crop may give the province a respite. There is no knowing that six months hence another worse famine may not be stalking the land. The province's resources must be carefully husbanded, prices brought under control, and public philanthropy and fellow-feeling raised to a higher pitch.

Along with such bold and cautious procedure in the coming months, there must be a searching inquiry into the causes of this calamity. It was quite in the fitness of things that during the most anxious days, people in authority made exhortations for bending all energies to the task at hand rather than to allocation of responsibility. But the question of responsibility apart, people have a right to know why they had to pass through such an ordeal, so that they may be wiser in the future. There is a real need for an inquiry into not only the immediate causes and responsibilities of individuals and Governments, but also into natural and man-made factors that were more powerful in their devastation than mere individual omissions and commissions. The committee of inquiry should concern itself more with the unearthing of deep-seated causes than with exposing the blunderers or bringing them to book. It should be a committee with breadth of vision and depth of imagination, which will delve deep and build high. There must be plans for permanent achievement. In short a vast catastrophe like this demands nothing less than a nation-building committee and not mere judicial inquiry. The committee must start with a full recognition of the fact that the entire economic life of the province has been disturbed and dislocated, and the end in view should be a better foundation and a more durable structure. A stricken Bengal must not turn into a beggar province, but she must be a self-respecting daughter of mother India, able to stand on her own legs and contribute to the general weal.

From highest Brahman to the yonder worm,
And to the very minutest atom,
Everywhere is the same God, the All-Love;
Friend, offer mind, soul, body, at their feet.

These are His manifold forms before thee,
Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God?
Who loves all beings, without distinction,
He indeed is worshipping best his God.

—Swami Vivekananda

THE MEANING AND PURPOSE OF THE GRIHASTHA ASHRAMA

By Dr. M. H. Syed, M.A., L.T., Ph.D., D.Lit.

Hinduism

It was not without reason that the life of the householder was religiously enjoined on every Aryan in the olden days. He learnt a necessary lesson in life by marrying and having children. He was considered an incomplete man unless he married and had one or two children. Manu says that a man is equal to man plus wife plus child. A man living an individual solitary life cannot possibly realize not only the joys of matrimonial life that rouse and deepen his emotional nature but also that added sense of responsibility that raises his moral level and infuses in him fresh vigour and vitality to fulfil his vocation in life.

If regard for others, self-denial, self-sacrifice, unselfish devotion to a loved one, are considered truly virtuous and laudable aspects of one's moral nature, surely family life is their nursing ground. It affords ample opportunity for every householder to learn and cultivate these all-important virtues, without which no one can evolve morally.

A bachelor thinks only of his own welfare and is self-centred and insular, whereas the same man as soon as he is wedded breaks the spell of isolation and begins to think more of his better half and his child than of his own comforts in life. It is in family life, where he has to deny himself in ever so many ways, that he learns the first lesson of unselfishness.

An all-round, cultured, and morally balanced man is one in whom all the three aspects of his consciousness, namely, cognition, emotion, volition are harmoniously developed. Lop-sided development does not help him.

An average man is enjoined gradually to try to expand his love of wife and children into the love of his neighbour, city, country, and nation. A man who cares only for the good of his own family to the detriment of his relations and neighbours, commits a moral wrong. He has to recognize that he is indissolubly connected with every other human being with whom he has been placed in life and without whom he cannot get on in this world.

The noblest sermon that the Buddha uttered is a song in praise of the simple-hearted ministries and loving offices of the household, among the members of the family, the relatives, the friends, the guests. It is only in the immature youth that the emotions are vague, the thoughts undefined, and his duties and responsibilites are not well-understood. When he enters the life of the householder, with greater experience of worldly life he discovers that there is no happiness like the happiness of the ideal home, and that the home ever appears as the ideal goal of the Pravritti half of life, on a higher and higher level, as the qualities of his soul unfold in greater and greater degree.

> The Householder is the elder of the Brahmachari, and even of the forest-dwellers, yea, even of the renouncer; for it is he who maintains them all, with physical and even mental food. (Manu).

All the vocations, in Manu's Theory of life, belong to the household order, which as the support of all is declared to be the highest :

> As all breathing animals live dependent on the air, even so do men of all stages of life live dependent on the householder. He is truly the eldest of all because he supports all with food, mental as well as physical. As the streams and rivers all have finality in the ocean, so do all men of all stages have finality in the householder. The student, the householder, the forest-dweller,

and the ascetic, all take their birth from the householder. And of all these, the householder ranks highest by all the ordinances of Veda and Smriti, for he supporteth them all. (Manu).

The strenuous life was enjoined upon all. The brahmin was to be content in matters physical, but was to study assiduously and ever expand his knowledge for the use of all. The Kshatriya, the Vaishya, the Shudra, was each to do his respective duty with unflagging enterprise and labour. *Every one was to pass through* the household and take his shape in the national labour, unless *there were exceptional reasons. And every one was to enter the household, not for sense pleasure but for progeny. There was an appropriate time for retirement from it. Excess and exaggeration were avoided on all sides.* They say that Manu honours not the woman. Yet no enlightened modern statesman or sovereign has embodied in the law of any modern State what *Manu's Law* contains :

The Âchârya exceedeth ten Upâdhyâyas in the claim to honour ; the father exceedeth a hundred Âchâryas ; but the mother exceedeth a thousand fathers in the right to reverence and in the function of educator. (Manu, II. 145).

A modern Jesuit is reported to have said, 'Give me a child for the first seven years of life; and then you can try to do anything you please with him afterwards.' He knew that the impress on soul-character of those first seven years could never be affected afterwards. Hence Manu says that the mother exceedeth a million teachers in the quality of educator. Thus does the ancient culture honour the woman. But it honours the mother-woman, not the militant woman who seeks mere pleasure and sensation and shirks domestic responsibilities as some women have begun to do in modern times.

Vallabha, the founder of a Vaishnava school of Vedanta, flourished in the fifteenth century and taught a non-ascetic view of life and religion, deprecating all kinds of self-mortification, which, he said, destroyed the body in which there lives a spark of the Supreme Spirit. Man is here in the world for activity; the Creator of the world is the embodiment of Kriyâ, activity. Brahman represents Kriyâ, and there is no purpose in being in the physical universe at all except for the development of right activity, directed by right thought and right desire; all else leads up to that. The world is full of desirable objects, filled by Ishvara Himself with objects that awaken desires; Ishvara Himself is hidden within every object, giving to each object its attractive charm. There is nothing in the whole world in which the Lord of the world is not embodied. And this vast array of desirable things is placed in the world by Himself. Desire is aroused and strengthened by the presence of all these objects of desire. And if desire had not a part to play in human evolution, then should we have been born into a world which was a desert, where there was no object to attract. But the presence of these pleasure-giving objects, and the presence of these pain-giving objects also, not only arouse attraction and repulsion in us, but also they arouse thought in us : for difficulties are placed between us and the objects of our desire; and thought is awakened within the Jivâtmâ, in order that these difficulties may be either over-climbed or evaded. And as we trace the course of human evolution, we find that thought is stimulated by desire; and that all the vigorous thought-activities that we see in the men of the world around us, are thought-activities motived by desire. Unless Ishvara has planned His universe very much amiss, there must be some meaning in the presence of these objects which arouse desire, some meaning in these difficulties in appropriating them that make the exertion of thought inevitable. Desire and thought make the motive and the guiding powers of action; and action comes after desire and after thought, and is their natural result. Thus thinking, we will come to realize that the whole thing is arranged in order that activity may be aroused, because as He tells us : 'Action is supe-

rior to inaction.' (Gita, III. 8). Hence man is stimulated and goaded into action.

Why is it that so much stress is laid by Shri Krishna upon action? The reason comes out very strongly when we turn to the third chapter of the Bhagavadgita—where He speaks so much of action—the chapter called *The Yoga of Action*. All depends upon action :

> From food creatures become ; from rain is the production of food ; rain proceedeth from sacrifice, sacrifice ariseth out of action ; know thou that from Brahman action groweth. (III. 14, 15).

The chain of life, the whole reproduction of beings, everything that makes a world, depends upon activity. Is it not written that 'For a sage, who is seeking Yoga, action is called the means'? (Gita, VI. 3.). 'For the same sage, when he is enthroned in Yoga, serenity is called the means.' But does serenity mean inaction? On the contrary, we read a little further and we find it said of the serene sage : 'Acting in harmony with Me, let him render all action attractive' (Gita, III. 26); so that this teaching of the value of action goes on from step to step—action, serenity, serene action. The reason why activity is necessary is given very fully in this same chapter. For it is declared :

> As the ignorant act from attachment to action, Bhârata, so should the wise act without attachment, desiring the welfare of the world. Let no wise man unsettle the mind of ignorant people attached to action.

The action of Ishvara Himself, on what does it rest?

There is nothing,

He says as Shri Krishna,

> in the three worlds, O Pârtha, there is nothing undone that should be done by Me, nor anything unattained that might be attained ; yet I mingle in action. For if I mingled not ever in action, unwearied, men all round would follow my path, O son of Prithâ. These worlds would fall into ruin, if I did not perform action ; I should be the author of confusion of castes and should destroy these creatures. (Gita, III. 22-24).

There, in truth, is the root of all right activity. Right activity is co-operation, with the Logos of the universe; that is the highest path, and to that all training, all effort, inevitably must tend. The divine will works most wisely for the supreme good. Whatever may happen to be the duty of the moment, that is to be done whole-heartedly.

Buddhism

Both by precept and example Ashoka was an ardent exponent of the strenuous life. In his first edict he lays down the principles, 'Let small and great exert themselves,' and in subsequent inscriptions he continually harps upon the necessity of energy and exertion. The Law or Religion (Dharma) which his edicts enjoin, is merely human and civic virtue, except that it makes respect for animal life an integral part of morality. In one passage he summarizes it as 'Little impiety, many good deeds, compassion, liberality, truthfulness and purity'. 'Right endeavour' is one of the parts of 'the noble eightfold path'; and the manner in which it is explained shows that it is necessary to use constant energy. This energy could not be exercised anywhere except in this physical world. Therefore worldly life has its purpose and value.

Social Service

It is said that the Hindus are selfish; they care only for their individual well-being and liberation, and not for the welfare of their fellowmen and the amelioration of their social, political, and moral condition. Nothing could be farther from the truth than this unauthorized statement. Practically all the schools of Indian philosophy believe in the common unity and divinity of the Self. They are repeatedly enjoined by all the spiritual teachers to love their neighbours, and every creature (Sarvabhutâni), as much as their own self, because they share one life. They are mutually interdependent upon each other. As an injury done to one part of a body is felt by the whole body, so the loss or injury done to one man is felt by the others. Another reason for

working unselfishly and disinterestedly for others is this : a man cannot be perfect without outgrowing his egoism and selfishness. One of the recognized methods of overcoming selfish tendencies is service.

Every human being owes some debts to society. He contracts debts in relation to his family, nation, and country. His growth and progress are to a great extent, due to the help and guidance he has received from his fellowmen. Unless and until he pays back all his dues to the uttermost farthing, he cannot win his freedom from the round of birth and death. No liberation, which is the goal of the effort of every Hindu, is possible without paying his Karmic debts, which in its turn demands constant activity.

Besides, one of the paths to union with God is Karmayoga, union with God through action. If an active and energetic man of the world desires to tread the path of spiritual perfection, he is not expected to renounce the world and cease from active life, as is wrongly supposed by some people who do not understand clearly the Hindu view of life.

Without learning to live in the lives of others one cannot proceed on this path of spiritual realization.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS*

By M. S. Aney

I feel a great pleasure in coming here and meeting so many brothers and sisters of Ceylon of all shades of opinion and of all castes, creeds, and colours. It is indeed a very great honour done by you, Sir, in asking me to preside over this august gathering which is being held to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of what I may call an epoch-making event of the last century—the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in the year of grace, 1893. It was a landmark in the progressive march of humanity towards a goal which, though not clear to the man in the street, has most powerfully attracted the great teachers of mankind of all times and climes to whom God's greatness and glory stood revealed in all its majesty and magnificence. That goal is the realization of the essential unity of substance pervading the creation and the non-essential diversity in it due to multiplicity of names and forms. Phenomenal diversity creates an illusion and throws a veil on the essential unity in creation. This veil is known as Avidyâ or ignorance which has to be torn before the individual can be asked to make an attempt to perceive the truth and the unity. The great Shankaracharya, the apostle of Advaita philosophy, has said in his introduction to *Shâriraka Mimâmsâ* :

'अस्य अनर्थहेतोः प्रहाणाय आत्मैकत्वविद्याप्रतिपत्तये सर्वे वेदान्ता आरभ्यन्ते

—All the Vedanta texts have been promulgated to destroy the above Avidyâ or ignorance, the cause of all the evil consequences, and to facilitate the realization of the principle of Âtmic unity pervading the creation.'

All knowledge which is an earnest search for truth and seeks to secure this essential unity, is Vedanta. From the earliest pre-historic times to the present day a line of earnest seekers after truth has come down to us in an unbroken succession. They are not confined to any particular part of the globe or a particular period of the time. There is no golden age in the history of the world

* Speech delivered at the Vivekananda Society, Colombo, on 19 September 1943, under the joint auspices of the Ramakrishna Mission and the Vivekananda Society, Colombo, on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Chicago Parliament of Religions.

when you have these masters moving on the earth in large numbers, nor is there any period of human history so barren when the world was entirely destitute of them.

In His infinite Divine mercy God has at all times and in all climes chosen some fortunate and favoured souls as His instrument to propagate the great truth and remind man in several ways of his duties and obligations to the brothers and sisters inhabiting not only this globe but the other celestial worlds of which our knowledge is either extremely meagre or nil.

All the important systems of religion that exist on earth are so many paths chalked out by the great world teachers to lead mankind on gradually to this distant but desirable destination. Hinduism has accepted toleration as an essential feature of human culture because it has perceived the unity of purpose and aim underlying the tenets of all these teachers.

In the Parliament of Religions Swami Vivekananda in his first speech laid great emphasis on the importance of the principle of toleration. He maintained, and in my opinion rightly maintained, that the very idea of convening a Parliament of Religions was the vindication of the principle of toleration without which all-sided progress of entire humanity will become impossible.

A brahmin, or for the matter of that everybody who has to perform his morning and evening prayers known as Sandhyâ Vandanâ, is warned by the Rishis against bigotry. He is asked to be catholic in his appreciation of the paths of devotion followed by others.

'आकाशात् पतितं तोयं यथा यास्यति सागरम् ।
सर्वदेवनमस्कारः केशवं प्रति गच्छति ॥

—Salutations made to all Gods ultimately reach to God in reality as all waters fallen from the clouds ultimately reach the ocean.'

In the famous *Mahimnastotra* the author Pushpadanta has expressed the same sentiment in the following felicitous lines :

'रुचीनां वैचित्र्यादृजुकुटिलनानापथजुषाम् ।
नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णव इव ॥

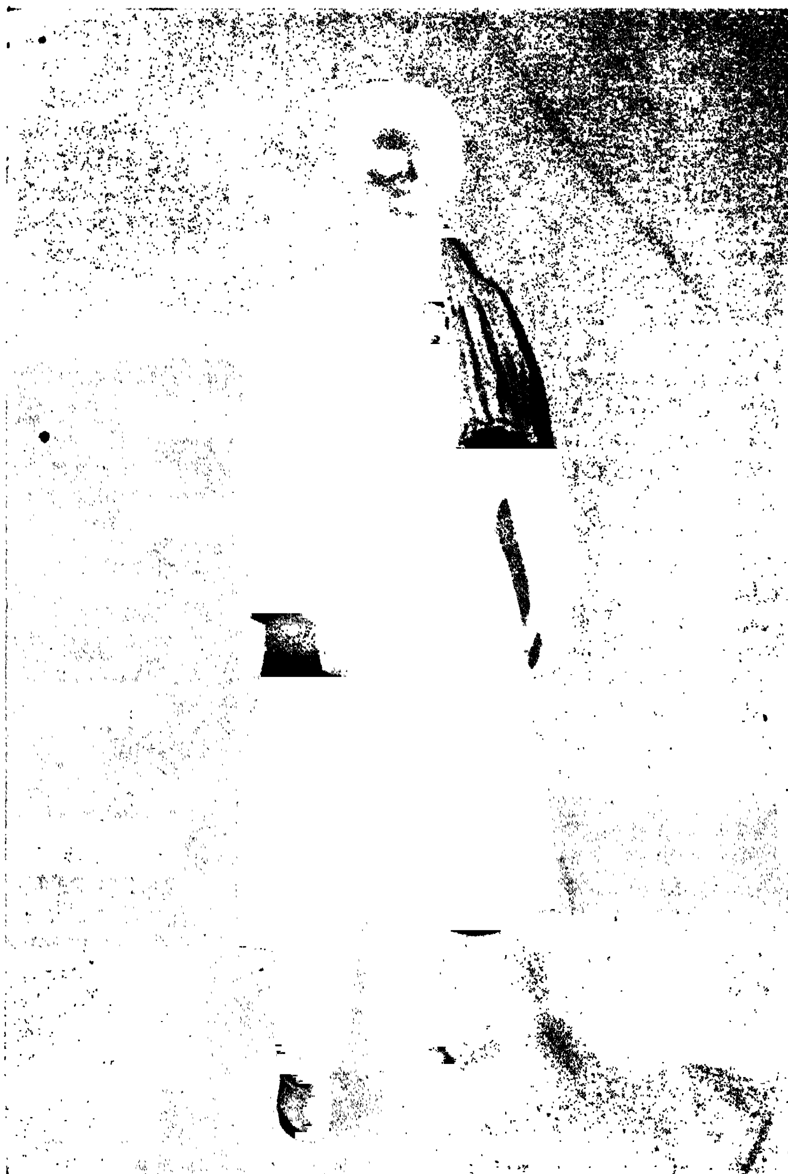
—Oh, God, Thou art the one goal of all the different sects and creeds followed by men according to their own inclinations, just as the ocean is the one destination for all the streams, small or great, flowing in various channels, curved or straight.'

There is one passage in the famous commentary of Sri Shankaracharya on the *Brahmasutras* to which I desire to invite the attention of all those who have met here to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Parliament of Religions. In that passage Sri Shankaracharya deals with the equipments of an earnest scholar of Vedanta :

'तस्मात् किमपि वक्तव्यं यदनन्तरं ब्रह्मजिज्ञासोपदिश्यत इति। उच्यते—नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेक इहामुत्रफलभोगविरागः शमादिसाधनसम्पन्मुमुक्षुत्वं च। तेषु हि सत्सु प्रागपि धर्मजिज्ञासाया ऊर्ध्वं च शक्यते ब्रह्म जिज्ञासितुं ज्ञातुं च न विपर्यये।—

—Then what is it on the attainment of which he can be trained in the sacred knowledge leading to the quest of Brahma? The reply is—a capacity to discriminate between essential and non-essential; a spirit of detachment from enjoyments of all fruits of action, terrestrial or celestial; a thorough mastery over emotions and passions and their manifestations; and a keen and unquenchable spirit of becoming free. If these four essential qualities exist in a student he can be initiated into the study of Brahma-jijnâsâ even before he has finished his training of Dharma-jijnasa, but not otherwise.'

These conditions represent the minimum of the intellectual training and also determine the standard of the moral character and spiritual urge in those who desire to enter on the course of training of this transcendental knowledge. All doors of innermost secrets of occult knowledge are flung wide open to those who desire to enter this temple of learning fully equipped in the manner mentioned above.



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ENTERING THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS, CHICAGO, 1893

The Parliament of Religions really had representatives who were the leading and the most highly respected personalities of the age, who had drunk deep at the fountain-heads of knowledge, and who had led a life dedicated to the cause of their religions. They deliberated on the tenets of the various important religions nearly for three weeks. And what was the conclusion at which they had arrived at the end? I cannot put it better than in the words of Swami Vivekananda who represented Hinduism at the conference and who is also the founder of the Ramakrishna Mission under whose auspices we are holding this meeting to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary :

'If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this : it has proved to the world that holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance :

"HELP AND NOT FIGHT"
"ASSIMILATION AND NOT DESTRUCTION"
"HARMONY AND PEACE AND NOT DISSENSION" '

It was the Parliament of Religions that revealed to India and the whole world the spiritual teacher who in later years proved to be the harbinger of a mighty intellectual revolution in India seeking for emancipation of her children from all bonds and fetters.

Before I conclude I take off my hat to the revered members who assembled at the Parliament of Religions fifty years ago in America and laid the foundations of the temple of religious toleration and universal brotherhood. I also bend my head in reverence at the feet of those great spiritual souls who had ministered in the past and have been ministering to the suffering soul of humanity even in our own times by preaching the gospel of truth and thus paving the path of the salvation of humanity and the attainment of its *summum bonum*. Lastly I offer my salutation to that great spiritual teacher of modern India, Swami Vivekananda, in all humility and reverence.

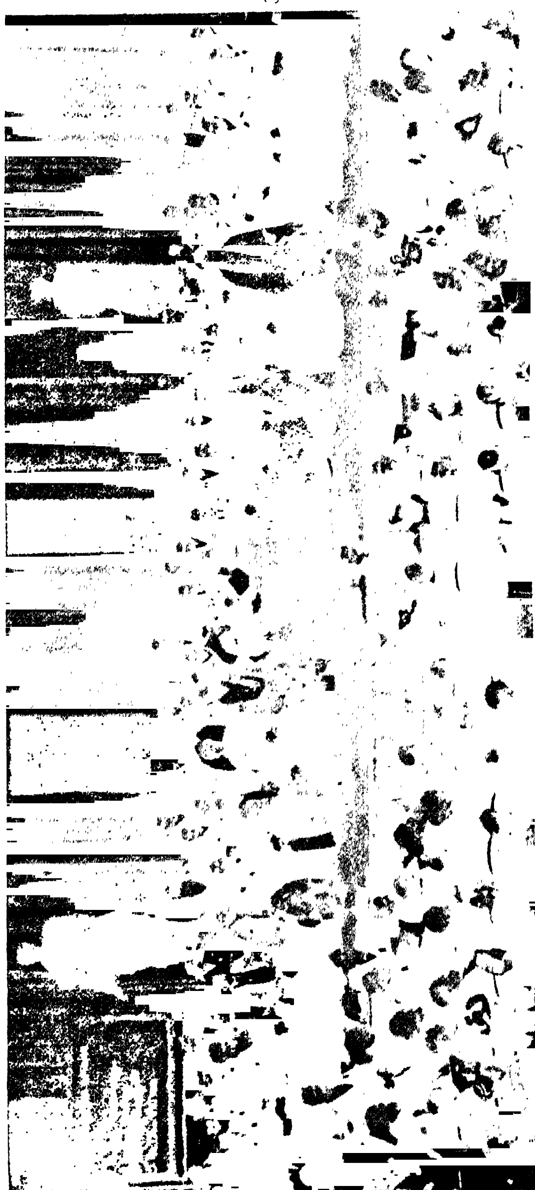
I have no doubt that their spirit will triumph, Kaliyuga will vanish and Kritayuga will dawn. Every person will embrace the other as his brother and will see in the faces of all the undisputable stamp of a common Divine parentage.

'सर्वे सुखिनः सन्तु । सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु । न कश्चिद् दुःखभाग् भूयात्॥

—Let all be happy. Let all be healthy. Let all see the beautiful and the blessed. Let none have any suffering.'

To the Hindu, man is not travelling from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lower to higher truth. To him all the religions, from the lowest fetichism to the highest absolutism, mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the Infinite, each determined by the conditions of its birth and association, and each of these marks a stage of progress; and every soul is a young eagle soaring higher and higher, gathering more and more strength till it reaches the Glorious Sun.

—Swami Vivekananda



SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS, CHICAGO, 1893
THE FOURTH FIGURE TO THE RIGHT OF THE PRESIDENT IS SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

HUMAN IDEOLOGIES AND THE HARMONY OF LIFE

By Wolfram H. Koch

With the Divine Knowledge of Advaita in your pocket, do whatever you wish; for then no evil can come over you.—Shri Ramakrishna.

In our day all sorts of noxious weeds have buried everything under their exuberant growth, because the outgoing tendencies of man have been stressed to such an extent that he has lost all contact with his innermost being and no longer gives to spiritual life the attention and place in his existence without which none of his efforts will be really fruitful and productive of harmony and goodwill. In its stead altars of mental idols have been erected and are fanatically being worshipped all over the world. For the human heart must have something to turn to and to adore.

Very few are left who still think of the deep significance of the words of the Vedic seer of old, 'Walk ye together on the path of life and speak ye all with voice unanimous, and may your minds all know the self-same Truth.'

Everywhere the alluring catchword of progress is sounded, and the world echoes with the slogan of practicality and social justice; but unfortunately the very foundations of life are overlooked in the din and bustle of the practical, so that the superstructure is in danger of toppling over and ending in a heap of ruins. Unpurified reason and intellect are given sway over man, and efforts at direct perception of the laws of life are no longer given any place in the hectic efficiency of our age. But the unanimous and harmonious path the seer speaks of cannot be walked or even reached through the subtleties of passion-ridden intellects that drive present-day humanity along in frenzied swirls and eddies in its mad dance of reciprocal destruction and utter inner and outer peacelessness.

The endless ripples of the ocean of life are taken to be everything and seen detached from their element, from the very substance that allows them their fragile ephemeral play, rising and falling on the powerful swell of manifestation. The mighty waves of the spiritually awakened God-men of mankind are scornfully pushed aside, their message and teachings neglected and scoffed at as benighted superstitions or impractical dreams not meant for modern people. And intellectual thought-constructs of limited and very often cramped personalities are put in their place—of men and women completely entangled in their own impulses and passions who did not and do not even succeed in overcoming their own pet prejudices, class, national and racial likes and dislikes and superiority-complexes and self-glorification.

In many of the movements that have brought about the greatest bloodshed humanity has probably ever witnessed, at least in this cycle of ours, there are grains of truth, little veiled flashes and sparks of insight—of something trying to come to life, to make itself heard, but mutilated through the impure media of expression it finds—something worth working out in a spirit of harmony and wide tolerance by those who wish to walk together on the path of life, to transcend discord and harshness and strife as far as they can be transcended in phenomenal existence. The whole outlook of their promoters, however, is one-sided and falsified through their own disharmonious personalities, and the harm they are doing is infinitely greater than the good positive points of their systems.

As Shri Ramakrishna says, 'Meditation brings out the real nature of the object of meditation and infuses it into the soul of the meditator.' But nothing is so

baneful, so pernicious, and so evil as ideologies brought forth by an uncontrolled though well-meaning and sincere human brain, by a mind that is not even able to stand aside dispassionately without hatred or fear of anything, and that has not first found its very own centre of being, its own deepest reality. For such a mind will always take the limited for its message of salvation and progress, whether it be based on racial or economic materialism or on a cramped and distorted fanatical religious feeling. Life always has its revenge in such cases, not in the sense of a vindictive power gloating self-complacently over the punishments it deals out, but in the sense of Karmic effects unforeseen by the unpurified human mind. And life always slowly readjusts the disturbed balance through untold human suffering, through self-imposed and self-created misery. Life does not tolerate despotism in any form in the long run and destroys the despot along with his slaves, apparently most ruthlessly, mercilessly, and yet as, perhaps, the greatest expression of infinite compassion shown to the living. How beautifully does Shri Krishna depict this process to Arjuna in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, this terrible headlong dance of destruction of blinded beings that rush maddened through their own ignorance to utter annihilation on the phenomenal plane, while the Divine, as it were, approves; for there is no way out left to their self-created perversity.

And this ignorance is not due to the action of an unjust almighty power giving man wrong impulses and goading him on to his own annihilation and misery, as some people think. At no time in the history of mankind has true guidance been lacking for those who were ready to listen, and with all the great illumined teachings of its God-men humanity to-day would really not stand in need of a new message but for its own wilful deafness.

'Nothing is problematical to the Incarnation', says Shri Ramakrishna. 'He solves the most difficult and intricate problems of life as the simplest of things in the world, and his expositions are such as even a child can follow. He is the sun of Divine Knowledge, whose light dispels the accumulated ignorance of ages.'

But who is prepared to pay the price and to listen?

Those people and movements that say there is no higher working of the Spirit of Life, because they see the evil in the world and in the institutional religions, are mistaken. Humanity has never been left without the great outstanding truths and the necessary Sâdhanâs for their personal realization by its Divinely inspired great ones; those truths and paths which will never change in their essence, however changing and multicoloured their different garbs and vestures may be according to age and clime, and which alone would create an order of true culture and wide, all-comprehensive tolerance. No ism will ever succeed in doing this, because every ism creates unhappiness in certain sections and ruthless tyranny of one section over the others, and every ism only stresses its own particular hobby, its own small facet of life, its own particular pet thought-construct, taking a partial and subconsciously biased view of man and existence.

In the modern world we find no scarcity of men and women ready to dedicate their all in a spirit of sacrifice to their own particular ism or to their temporary man-god; but fruitful dedication must be all-encompassing, and transcend all limited groups in a higher synthesis containing them all. One-sided fanatical dedication results in ultimate evil and passion. Limited, falsified dedication may be heroic, may demand everything, the most precious gift he can bestow, of its own worshipper; but it remains essentially evil and baneful to humanity in its ultimate and inescapable consequences once the Karmic wheel has been set in motion.

So the dedication generally found to-day does not help man in walking together on the path of life. It divides.

It never unites. It raises barriers where barriers should be pulled down. It fosters hatred and violence where there should be tolerance and understanding. And in the end, it is self-destructive. Such dedication reminds one of the man who sincerely, prompted by a deep longing of his heart, wished to create a beautiful image of Mahâdeva, but owing to his own inner deformity only succeeded in modelling a most hideous monkey in spite of his yearning.

The man of limited vision—and every unpurified human mind must of necessity be limited, cramped, and one-sided—even if he is perfectly sincere in his intention and selfless in the aim of his particular ideology, cannot create anything really harmonious unless he himself tries to attain to his own liberation and ceases to be an abject serf to the passionate promptings of his subconscious self-created demons.

India recognized this fact long before the West even caught a hazy glimpse of its truth. She has known long ago that man is not only his apparent surface consciousness, however intelligent and wise this may seem to be. And when a Westerner for the first time gets an opportunity of contacting with open unbiased eyes a really spiritually developed and cultured Indian, he is generally struck by the wholeness of his personality, a harmonious wholeness scarcely ever to be met in the West. And wholeness is always very much akin to—or perhaps even synonymous with—holiness, which after all is only the perfect healthiness of the truly liberated human being shining in its own light with the unlimited, all-embracing, unhampered radiance of the Spirit, and thereby slowly, unobtrusively leading those with whom it comes into touch, and who are ready for it, back to their own centre of being, and thence to an ever-expanding consciousness and to the living, vibrating fellowship of all Life, to that self-same Truth the Upanishadic Seer speaks of.

How may I bear hate now to anyone,
When my Lord goes about proclaiming loud
With His own blessed lips: 'I am at play
Hidden behind the beating of all hearts'?

sings Sur Das in the full realization of the harmonious oneness of life walking together with all sentient beings on the path of existence. And in our day the great spiritual sons of India still proclaim the same truth through the living example of their own lives and their teachings.

Because they lack this deep realization of oneness and tolerance all the offered remedies and medicines of the self-created healers of our day are at best but partly efficacious, partial solutions of certain social problems. None of them can ever bring a real and lasting cure, because they do not touch the vital roots of man and continue to focus their vision only on one or two facets of his being, because they do not really see themselves and do not know how to manipulate their own mechanism of body and mind. The vision of everyone of them is lacking in the necessary totality and, therefore, create disharmony and further strife and suffering. They simplify and at the same time complicate the human problem too much with their biased one-sided solutions. They try to create, as it were, a symphony played by a great number of the same instruments without the beautifying and fertile interplay of many sound-colours and contrapuntal voices firmly established on the mighty organ-point of the Eternal and singing in freedom of movement and yet in perfectly harmonious vibrations their own individual parts in the mighty consonance of the whole work as conceived by its creator.

Many do not see that anything that disunites must bear a serious flaw in it somewhere, that anything that tries to impose itself—even if apparently for the good of all—by violence on the living, palpitating play of life, must bear the poisonous germ of misery and destruction within it. It is not by trampling —even in the very best of intentions— on every other conception and way of life different from ours, by fanatically

trying to root it out by force, that the human problem will ever be solved, class welded in harmony to class, nation to nation, race to race in a supra-class, supra-national, and supra-racial harmony in diversity, each class, each nation, each race joyfully singing its own part in the majestic fugue of existence. In the hand of a master the manifold contrapuntal voices never clash, are never warring voices of disharmony while they retain their individual parts and learn to execute them to perfection.

A symphony gains its fullest beauty only when every member of the orchestra knows the whole pattern and the place his own instrument has to take in it, never by any one instrument —however beautiful its voice and timbre may be—usurping the parts of all others.

But this is just what present-day ideologies and isms are constantly, obstinately out to do; and there they go astray, sowing the seeds of future chaos and misery that will only be different in form and stress from ours. Without carefully studying the nature of life, instead of the mere history of Life, in himself and in others, man can never find an adequate solution for any of his most pressing problems. And the nature of life can never be studied unless a man detaches himself from his passionate longings and prejudices, from the whole wild frantic tribe of subconscious impulses that continually disturb the vision of Reality through the blurred imperfect reflection of the mirror of his own impure mind.

That is why since time immemorial the great messengers of mankind have been stressing again and again the necessity of self-realization, self-knowledge and self-mastery, which means much more than the mere outward control, than the self-control outwardly shown and exercised by the well-bred gentleman and gentlewoman of our civilization, though these are a necessary step towards it.

Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa teaches, 'First the realization of God—i.e., self-realization or the realization of Truth—and then His creation. Vâlmiki was given the Mantra "Râma" to meditate upon, but was instructed to begin by taking it in its inverted form, "Marâ, Marâ", that is, Ma or Ishvara, and Ra or Jagat—first God and then the universe.'

And to the Christian was given Christ's message, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.'

'Highly impractical!' many moderns will say. But is it? Would it not be worth trying? Should a man not do his best to gain his own experience before passing a cock-sure self-complacent judgement on anything the great sages of humanity have taught? Should he not at least be as sceptical in his attitude in regard to all the modern ideologies constantly dinned into his ears by men who had not even solved their own problem?

In our day Shri Ramana Maharshi stresses the value of unbroken self-inquiry for all those who really long to unravel both the problem of man and of the apparent colourful, hopelessly intricate and contradictory play of life with all its misery and joy, fulfilments and frustrations. Would it really not be worth-while to risk the great adventure and follow the many hints given to mankind by its illumined minds, to become or try to become creators of harmony instead of cramped, fanatical, one-sided theories and systems? Before creating merely intellectually conceived thought-constructs should man not try to attain first to his own Divine manhood, to rid himself of the brute living within himself and swaying him in many ways? Should he not first endeavour to find the solution to his own life, gain knowledge of its nature, before building up ephemeral ideologies and trying to force them on the living, pulsating energies of life? Should not some of us modern men and women turn to the great Incarnations and humbly learn at their feet the essence and quality of truly fruitful dedication and sacrifice, gained

through steady, undaunted perseverance and the attainment of same-sightedness and all-comprehensiveness of mind and heart? Should we not ponder in our hours of leisure on the deep significance of Christ's words, 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect', or on the beautiful saying of Shri Ramakrishna, 'The Lord Himself is playing in the form of man. He is the great juggler and this phantasmagoria of Jiva and Jagat is His great jugglery. The Juggler alone is true, the jugglery is false.'?

All modern ideologies, based as they are on the fleeting aspects of society and phenomenal life, simply shift the unhappiness and misery of existence on to other shoulders, which is no solution, as the quantity of suffering remains the same. Nothing is really gained if I succeed in removing a certain form of misery or injustice from my section of society or my people or my race, if henceforth other sections, peoples, and races are weighed down through the misery I created for them through my thought and my action. Far better would it be in such cases to let the great wise forces of life operate unhampered.

The way of self-inquiry, self-purification and self-mastery and of gaining deeper insight will certainly never be the way of the masses, but it might be the way of the leaders, of leaders showing them the way to a better state and understanding of things, and helping them in solving their own most pressing problems by the insight they have gained into the nature of life. Anyhow, this should be the way of the educationists, thus avoiding at least part of the suffering and misery created by every non-illumined ideology haunting the brain of man during his helpless serfdom to his senses and prejudices.

Years ago at the first personal intimate contact with living representatives of India's great spiritual tradition, a small light began to dawn in the Souls of some Western aspirants, showing how differently life could be lived and conceived of through following the great adventure of the Spirit for many years in steadfastness and utter dedication, through sincere self-inquiry, independent thinking, and gaining one's own insight which transcends as much any ideological thought-construct and philosophical system and theory as the life of a living pulsating being transcends its own copy in stone or colour or print. For the path of life, walked in harmony with all our fellows of earth, water, and air, in goodwill alone, shows how to overcome the contradictions and enmities of phenomenal life in a higher synthesis of beauty and peace.

For the wise one who is ever immutable and fearless, there is no darkness, no light, no relinquishment, nothing whatsoever. (*Ashtâvakra Samhitâ*).

The herd instinct has no place in this path; for it is the weed growing out of the marshy soil of unpurified emotions and thoughts, and can easily be swayed by any clever outside influence that knows its laws and utter impulse-driven, desire-bound irrationality and greed.

Therefore Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa asks man to think for himself in his parable of the washerman who stores heaps and heaps of other peoples' clothes in his house before they are washed, but whose room becomes empty again as soon as the washing is done, concluding it with the words, 'Be not a washerman in your thoughts!' And the Buddha teaches man to be a lamp unto himself. But only a completely purified heart and mind can be such a lamp unto himself and think and feel really constructive thoughts of Truth, thought that will not create further havoc and misery and chaos among our comrades and brothers walking on the path of life and consciously or half-consciously yearning for freedom, plenitude, and fulfilment.

Many are the paths that lead and wind to His shrine. In many a form of strangeness and many a garb He steals among us. Let me but catch His whisper amidst the din and tumult of clashing creeds and sects of the world. Let me but hunger and thirst for Him, the Incomparable! (Nammalvar).

THE ICY HOME OF THE GANGES

By Swami Apurvananda

How many of those who daily see the grimy water of the broad Ganges at Calcutta, with its ugly burden of modern industry, have realized that this mother of Indian rivers—Ganga Mai—rises, as a tiny stream of crystal purity, in an almost inaccessible corner of the mighty Himalayas? I am deeply grateful to Ganga Mai's spirit for allowing me access to her heavenly abode; and one of the ways in which I can express a little of that gratitude is to share with the readers of the *Prabuddha Bharata* some of the experiences of my unforgettable journey to Gangotri and Gomukhi in the summer of 1938.

The starting-point of our journey was Dehra-Dun, and my companions were a brother Sannyâsin and two Paharis from Almora. Though the chief goal of our pilgrimage was Gangotri and Gomukhi, we had decided to visit also other famous places of pilgrimage like Jumnotri, Uttar Kashi, Kedarnath, Badrinarayan, Satapantha, and Svargarohan.

Jumnotri

We first went to Jumnotri which is in the Tehri-Garhwal State at an altitude of more than eleven thousand feet. It is one of the important places of pilgrimage in Uttarakhanda (Northern Himalayas). The real source of the Jumna is a glacier some two thousand feet above the Temple of Jumnotri.

The sublime beauty of the place; the majestic surroundings of snow-clad peaks against the background of a deep forest of deodar, pine, and oak; and, above all, the awe-inspiring solitude held us spellbound. No wonder that this soul-stirring place attracts devout pilgrims from all over India. These—young and old, men and women—undertake the perilous journey, year after year, to visit the little temple which contains the images of Jumna Mai and other goddesses.[1] When, at last, the weary pilgrim reaches the holy place, the magic of the whole scene makes him forget all the difficulties of the journey; and he returns home with a heart full of gratitude to the river goddess. The goddess, however, forbids entry to her sacred precincts during the whole of winter when everything, including the little temple and the Dharmashâlâs, are buried deep in snow, and no pilgrim ventures to invade the solitude.

Uttar Kashi

It was a lovely morning on the first of July when we reached Uttar Kashi (the Northern Benares). We had by then been walking for eleven days and had covered a distance of nearly one hundred and fifty miles through one of the most difficult parts of the Himalayas. Uttar Kashi is also situated in the Tehri-Garhwal State at an altitude of more than three thousand feet. Surrounded on all sides by lofty mountain ranges, the holy Ganges winds round this place in a semi-circle. The natural beauty and peace of these surroundings have for centuries made Uttar Kashi a famous place of Tapasyâ for Sâdhus. Hindu monks of various denominations have been coming here for ages to pass their time in the practice of austerities and deep meditation in order to attain peace and illumination. It is a unique sight to watch these monks, in ochre robes and with shaven heads, come out once daily from their habitations and walk, with gentle steps and eyes cast down, to receive alms from the Chhatras (free

[1] As the original temple had been crushed by a huge avalanche during the winter prior to our visit, the holy images had been housed in a temporary shelter when we visited them for Darshan.

kitchens) permanently maintained for this purpose by religious-minded donors. *They take their alms, consisting of Châppâties, Dâl, and cooked vegetables,* and quietly move away to the bank of the holy river or to their caves or cottages to partake of their simple fare. That is the only time during the day when these Sâdhus are out of the shelters where they spend their time in prayer and in various forms of meditation. The sun shining on the charming little cottages of the monks which nestle by the side of the swift-flowing Ganges, makes a lovely picture.

Nearly three hundred Sâdhus live in Uttar Kashi during the summer months, depending on the alms they get from the Chhatras; but during winter, when there is frequent snow-fall, many of them move away to other suitable places.

Uttar Kashi is the head-quarters of a Tahsil and contains a Middle English school and a few shops. As in Benares, there are temples of Shiva and Mother Annapurnâ, as well as of other gods and goddesses—but in a miniature form. These little temples are located in a particular area and make an inspiring sight for the pious devotee. There is a large Dharmashâlâ of Kali Kambli Baba where all pilgrims are accommodated free of cost.

We rested at Uttar Kashi for two days. During that period I took stock of the situation regarding the further stages of our journey which meant a trek of more than five hundred miles through still more difficult mountain country rising at places to an altitude of nearly 16,000 feet. The hardships of our journey during the last few days had already told upon our health and the weak body wanted us to turn back. But the voice of the Spirit urged us on, and I passed most of the time in prayer and meditation in order to fortify the soul within. The sight of Jumnotri had already put my mind in an exalted mood, and at the end of two days of spiritual absorption at Uttar Kashi, an inner voice seemed to whisper in my ear that we should go on.

Bhatwari and Gangani

It was a little before dawn on the 3rd of *July when we left Uttar Kashi.* Another Sannyâsin had joined our party and we were now five in all. It was dark when we started and perfect stillness reigned everywhere. The murmuring sound of the Ganges swiftly flowing by the side of the road made the stillness even more intense. After walking two miles we crossed a wooden bridge on the Ashi (a tributary of the Ganges) and entered a deep forest. No human habitation was in sight except a few huts on the hill opposite.

The first glow of the morning sun touching the distant mountain peaks enlivened the whole scene. Walking slowly, we covered a distance of nine miles and halted at the Dharmashâlâ at Manori for the noon meal. There is also a small shop here which keeps a few necessities for sale. As we wanted to make another nine miles that day in order to reach Bhatwari where we were to stay for the night, we finished our hurried meal and again started walking in the scorching heat of the midday sun. The road gradually became narrower and more steep, and walking in the sun for more than two hours made us very thirsty. There was, however, no spring on the way and we could quench our burning thirst only by drinking the stagnant rain water which had collected by the roadside. The snow-white Ganges rumbled along, but as she flowed some three hundred feet below us between steep hills it was impossible to reach her.

We halted for a while at Kumalti where there were a few shops which remain open during the pilgrimage season and occasionally give shelter for the night. As Bhatwari was now only four miles away we pushed on, determined to reach it as early as possible. Since leaving Uttar Kashi we had met hardly anybody on the way and it seemed there was no human habitation in this part of the country.

The sight of Bhatwari from a distance

was very picturesque with its background of a lofty mountain and the Ganges flowing by. Although we reached the place long before sunset, many pilgrims had already arrived and one of the two Dharmashâlâs was quite full. We tried to get accommodation in the second Dharmashâlâ which was empty; but the Chowkidar refused to open any of the locked-up rooms, saying they were meant only for distinguished pilgrims. We afterwards came to know that for this Chowkidar a 'distinguished' pilgrim was one who gave him a fat tip! As it was, we had no other alternative but to occupy a portion of the open verandah of the crowded Dharmashâlâ. We were there exposed to the blast of an icy wind which blew from the Ganges flowing close by. After finishing our simple meal we retired for the night, but sleep was impossible. As if the piercing wind was not enough, we were bitten by fleas and bugs and had to pass the whole night sitting up and shivering. Long before dawn and before any other pilgrim had started we left Bhatwari, tired and irritable, for our next halting place, Gangani.

It was not long before the enchantment of 'the silent, solemn hour' drove away our fatigue and irritation. It was still dark and even the birds had not left their nests. Only the fluttering of the wings of a sleeping bird or its unconscious utterance of a dream-note sometimes broke the silence of those early hours. This serene, and at times mystic, calm distinguishes the Himalays from all great mountain ranges, and has drawn to them again and again mountain lovers from all parts of the world.

Myriads of bright stars lighted our path and made the surroundings dimly visible. As we advanced in silence the first glow of the dawn lighted the dark face of the earth and the gentle blending of light and darkness gave an ethereal beauty to the whole scene.

The road being narrow, steep and stony, our progress was very slow. After nearly two hours of walking we came upon a party of Bhutias who were just about to move their camp containing hundreds of sheep and goats. The musical sound of bells of different sizes on the necks of these animals was pleasant to the ear after the long silence. The Bhutias are excellent traders and their usual beast of burden is the hardy mountain sheep or goat which is not deterred by rain or snow.

Before the morning sun could shed its full lustre a thick dark cloud spread over the sky and we were suddenly caught in a heavy rain-storm. As there was no place of shelter on the road we were compelled to walk on in spite of the blinding rain. The road was so narrow in places that it was difficult to keep even our umbrellas open. The ascent became steep and slippery and the rain water began to flow down our path in torrents. Though completely drenched, we trudged along slowly for more than an hour, shivering with cold, until gradually the fury of the storm abated.

We had to walk nine miles before we came at about 10 a.m. to a hanging bridge over the Ganges which is the entrance to Gangani. The current of the Ganges here was so strong that we felt nervous when crossing the shaking bridge. There was a hot spring near this bridge and after making arrangements for our stay at the Dharmashâlâ at Gangani we all came to the spring for a bath. Curious forms of stalactite and stalagmite decorated the entrance to the spring, and it was probably their mineral deposits that made our bath so refreshing. We decided to pass the night at Gangani in order to make up for the lack of sleep at Bhatwari. But sleep was again denied us that night because of the violent noise made by a party of drunken Paharis who had gathered in the shop adjoining the Dharmashâlâ. The Chowkidar of the Dharmashâlâ who was also one of the merry-makers was so ashamed of his conduct next morning that he came to ask for forgiveness before we left at daybreak.

A Perilous Moment

The whole sky was overcast with heavy clouds when we left Gangani, but this was only to be expected because we were doing the pilgrimage during the monsoon. The difficulties of the road increased as we walked on. There was again a steep ascent and in some places the width of the road was only about a foot and a half. More than three hundred feet below us the Ganges roared and one false step meant certain death. The narrow road was further blocked by huge boulders and we had often to crawl to get over them. We had not gone for more than an hour when a violent rainstorm burst over us and we had to close our umbrellas for fear of being blown away. The thundering roar of the Ganges echoing from the mountain sides, combined with the whistling sound of the storm, made us feel as if the end of the world was approaching.

In that awful predicament, the only thing we could do was to resign ourselves to God. In fear and trepidation, we moved slowly onward, our limbs shivering with cold. Just as we were taking a turn, we were suddenly taken aback by a terrible, booming sound which shook the whole place and resounded from all sides of the mountain. Our legs refused to move, and we suddenly saw a huge boulder falling from above the mountain within ten yards of us. It came down with such a force and velocity that it crashed into tiny bits before our eyes. I was leading the party and the two Paharis behind me shrieked loudly. In the confusion, I suddenly realized the mortal danger of standing where we were, because other loose boulders might at any moment roll down and crush us. Shouting to my companions to follow me, I began to run as fast as I could. When we had run about a hundred yards, one of the Paharis fell down and fainted. We all lifted him up and carried him to a place of safety. Our hearts were full of gratitude to God for our escape from certain death. We then realized that, although that huge boulder had fallen only ten yards away from us, we had not heard any sound until it actually crashed to the ground. The roar of the Ganges near by and the noise of the rain and wind had completely drowned the warning sound of the falling boulder.

As soon as the Pahari had been brought round, we resumed our journey, and by the time we reached Loarinag the fury of the rain had abated. We took shelter in the solitary shop there and were refreshed by a drink of hot milk and tea. The sky was almost clear when we started for Sukki, another five miles away. For some time our path ran parallel to the Ganges but we soon began to lose track of it. When we had walked about a mile and a half, we reached a point after which there was no trace of any further path. As we stood there in bewilderment, we saw a man who came from the opposite direction crossing the bed of the Ganges at a place where the water was only knee-deep. He told us that, as the original path had been badly damaged by the monsoon rains, pilgrims had to cross the river where he had gone in order to join the main road about two furlongs away. He warned us against the danger of stones falling from the adjacent mountain, and advised us to keep as close as possible to the foot of the mountain. We followed his advice when we slowly crossed the river, and came on to the main road without any serious injury from the falling stones.

Sukki, Jhala, and Kharshil

The ascent to Sukki was steep and long, and it was nearly midday when we reached the Dharmashâlâ there, completely exhausted. Though large, the Dharmashâlâ was packed with pilgrims going to and returning from Gangotri. We occupied a little space in one of the rooms of the Dharmashâlâ and did our cooking in the open courtyard. Soon after our meal we left for Dharali, eight miles away, where we intended to spend the night. From Sukki to Jhala—a



A LOVELY FALL

distance of only three miles—the road was fairly good, and there were scattered habitations here and there. Jhala is a big Pahari village with two Dharmashâlâs, but we pushed on without stopping. The few men and women that we met on the road appeared to be in rags, and almost all the houses we saw were in a dilapidated condition. Their roofs were of timber, because no other roofing—so we were told—could withstand the pressure of the heavy snow which fell there during the winter months. The road now passed through meadows, and the Ganges, flowing by, looked shallow and broad. The play of whit clouds in the blue sky on the top of a distant mountain range made a charming sight. We occasionally met a procession carrying the village deity to Gangotri for its sacred bath. These village parties come almost every year from distant places, carrying their gods and goddesses in decorated palanquins, beating drums and fanning the deities.

We saw a very big village in the distance, with hundreds of sheep and goats grazing in open places, and were told by one of the Pandas of Gangotri who had accompanied us from Jhala that this was Kharshil, a big Bhutia village containing over two hundred families who carry on trade with Tibet through the Jelukhaga Pass which is at an altitude of 17,490 ft. Our road passed through this village, and on both sides were the timber-roofed dwelling houses of the Bhutias. Woollen cloths were heaped in places, ready for sale, and hundreds of small bags loaded with Indian commodities were kept in the open verandahs for despatch to Tibet. Several Bhutias, men and women, were busy making woollen thread. On the outskirts of this village was a small



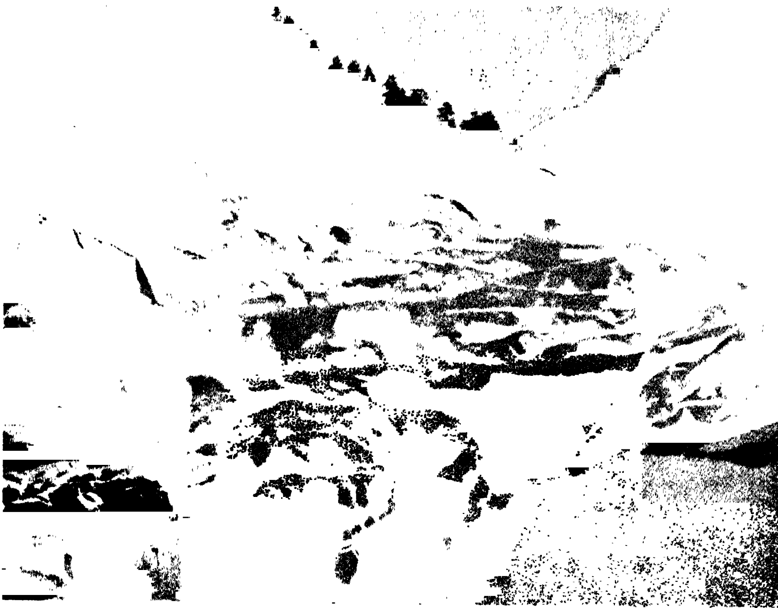
THE TEMPLE OF GANGOTRI

temple, near which two rivulets of transparent water met. From the junction of these rivulets one road went towards Mukhua, the village of the Pandas of Gangotri, and the other road towards Dharali, our immediate destination. After leaving Kharshil, the road passed through a dense forest of deodars and other Himalayan trees.

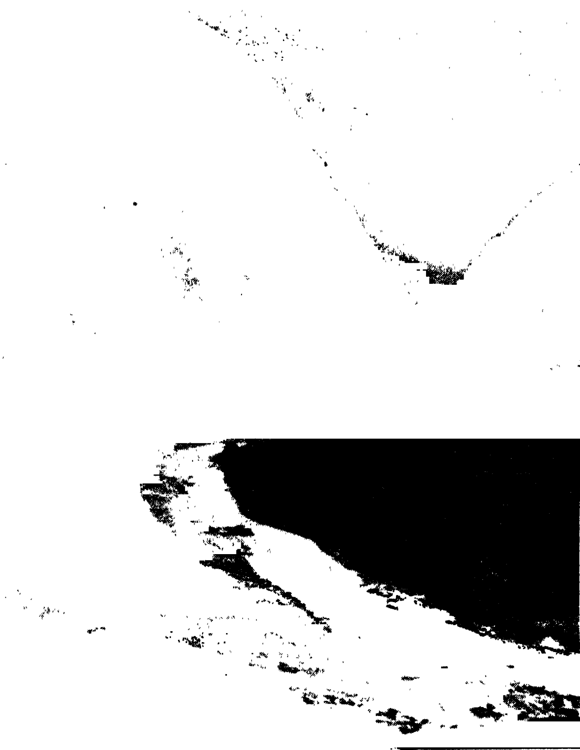
DHARALI

The afternoon sun was shining in all its glory on the top of the mountain when we reached Dharali. We occupied a room on the first floor of the big Dharmashâlâ of Kambli Baba. The view which met our eyes was superb. The Ganges was flowing just in front of us, and on the opposite bank was Mukhua —the village of the Pandas of Gangotri —in the lap of a mountain. We were encircled by a lovely forest of deodars, beyond which was a chain of lofty mountains. Not far from our Dharmashâlâ was a little white temple of Shiva, and the timber-roofed dwellings of the villagers of Dharali. During the winter months the whole of this region is under heavy snow and the villagers are cut off from all communication with the outside world.

As there was still time for the night, I went and sat alone by the side of the beautiful, little Shiva temple and was absorbed for a long time, gazing at the holy Ganges. The golden rays of the setting sun, which had a magic effect on the whole scene, gradually began to fade, and the shades of night crept in. In that lovely blending of light and darkness the contours of all the surrounding objects became more and more indistinct until the advancing night swallowed them up altogether. The evening worship began in the Shiva temple, with the blowing of conchs and the singing of devotional songs. In the stillness of the approaching night these temple sounds echoed and re-echoed in the distant mountains. The villagers were now returning from the fields, driving home their cattle; and the women, carrying big loads of fodder, were chatting and laughing. Their random laughter, mingled with the sound of the bells round the necks of



THE GANGES BELOW GANGOTRI



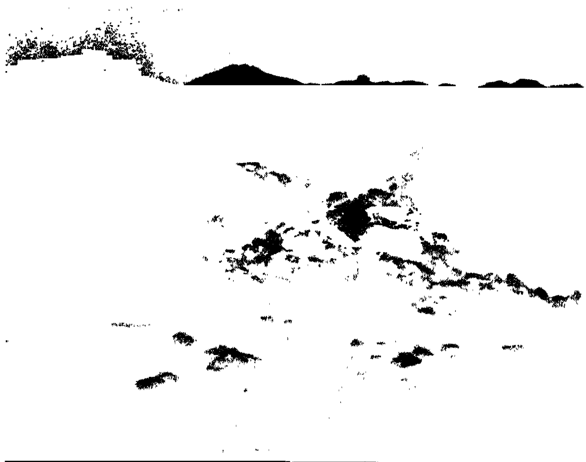
ANOTHER VIEW OF THE GANGES

the cattle, gladdened the whole atmosphere.

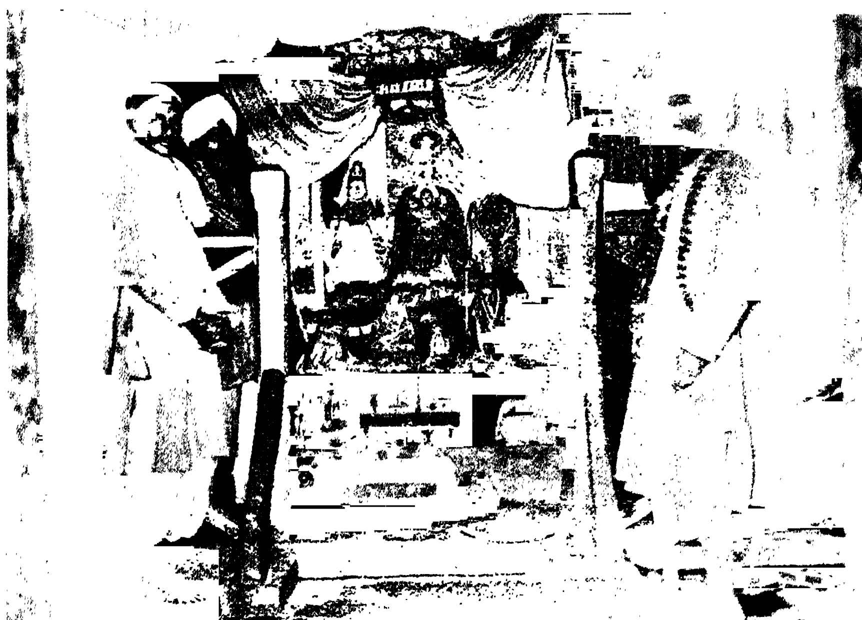
I at last returned to the Dharmashâlâ, which was already full of pilgrims, and joined my companions. Now came the Lumbardar of Dharali whom we had sent for to make arrangements for our projected trip to Gomukhi after reaching Gangotri. As there was no regular track from Gangotri to Gomukhi it was impossible to go there without a guide; and it was also necessary to carry tents and some provisions, as there was no rest-house or place of shelter on the way. No tents were available in the village; but the Lumbardar, after seeing the letter of introduction I had brought him from the Manager of the Kambli Baba Dharmashâlâ at Uttar Kashi, promised to do all he could to secure for us a guide and coolies. As he wanted to ascertain which of the villagers who had gone to Gomukhi previously would be able to accompany us this time, he asked us to come to his house at about 9 p.m. for an answer.

By now the Dharmashâlâ was over-crowded with pilgrims going up to, and coming down from, Gangotri. The party of pilgrims from Nepal who had accompanied us to Jumnotri, had arrived at the Dharmashâlâ before evening, but none of their coolies had yet come with their belongings although it was nearly 8 p.m. We lent them our lantern and helped in the search for their lost coolies. As the search proved unsuccessful, the women of the party began to weep and there was a great commotion in the Dharmashâlâ.

After our meal we went to the house of the Lumbardar, which was in the heart of the village. All the houses we passed were double-storied and made wholly of timber. The ground floor was always used for cattle and the owner



GOMUKHI



THE SHRINE AT GANGOTRI



SNOWY RANGES

and his family occupied the upper floor. As kerosene oil is a rare thing in these parts, the villagers use flares made of pine or deodar wood for various purposes. The Lumbardar received us very cordially, and all the young members of his family as well as children from the adjacent houses gathered round us. To our great disappointment, the Lumbardar told us that none of the villagers who had actually been to Gomukhi, was willing to accompany us, because this was the height of their cultivation season and they depended entirely for their maintenance during the year on the produce of their fields. The Lumbardar, however, promised to send his son early next morning to another village to try and get us a guide and coolies for Gomukhi.

On returning to the Dharmashâlâ, we found the Nepalese pilgrims still in trouble, because their continued search for their coolies, which had taken them as far as Kharshil, had proved fruitless. As it was already late at night and these pilgrims were shivering with cold, we lent them some of our warm clothes and blankets. The lost coolies, who had followed a wrong track, were picked up again at Gangotri.

Next morning we were the only pilgrims left in the Dharmashâla, as we had to wait till some arrangements could finally be made for our intended journey to Gomukhi. I took this opportunity to go out for a walk in order to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the place. The sun had by that time come up from behind the mountain range; and it revealed a charming brook, just near the village, which carried icy water from the snow in the vicinity. The rays of the morning sun also lighted up Mukhua, the village of the Gangotri Pandas, where the goddess of the Ganges is transferred for worship during the winter months when the main temple of Gangotri is buried under snow. Before returning to the Dharmashâlâ, I took some fresh vegetables from the garden of a villager on the outskirts of Dharali. These vegetables were for us a luxury, because we had not tasted any for a long time; but the owner of the garden, though poor, refused to accept any money from us as we were monks.

We finished our meal before noon and waited impatiently for the guide and coolies promised by the Lumbardar. It was nearly 2 p.m. when the Lumbardar came smiling to the Dharmashâlâ with a guide and one cooly. Knowing how difficult it was to secure any local men at that time of the year, we were very grateful to the Lumbardar for what he had done, and rewarded him for his timely help. On the advice of our new guide, we borrowed from the Lumbardar, before leaving, some hatchets for use in the erection of temporary shelters during our journey from Gangotri to Gomukhi.

The Last Stages to Gangotri

After leaving Dharali, our road went for a time by the side of the Ganges and was shady and smooth because of a covering of pine needles. After walking about four miles we came to a place called 'Jangla' where the Ganges had to be crossed by a wooden bridge. There was only one shop here and a big dak bungalow for the use of high officials of the Gharwal State. After a while the road began to ascend and was narrow and risky in some places. We next crossed the road which led into Tibet by the Jelukhaga Pass.

After a short climb, we reached the confluence of the Ganges and the Jannu Ganga or Jahnavi Ganga. This latter is a big river which rises from the Jelukhaga Pass and discharges its icy waters into the Ganges with a tremendous force. After crossing the suspension bridge over the Jahnavi Ganga, we began the very steep ascent of Bhairav Ghati—considered to be the most difficult ascent in the whole journey to Gangotri. Although this ascent covers only a mile and a half, the exertion required for the climb is equal to the energy spent in a long run. As we proceeded slowly, we saw many of the pilgrims sitting down,

exhausted, and looking helplessly upwards. The road was also very narrow in places, and as the Ganges flowed more than 700 feet below, one false step meant certain death.

The deep indents made in the mountain sides, almost up to the top, on both sides of the Ganges, showed that in the distant past the bed of that river here must have been much higher than at present. As to how many thousands of years it took the mighty Ganges to come down to its present level, is for the geologists to decide.

Almost half way up the ascent there was a small spring and we saw many pilgrims lying down exhausted by its side after having their fill of water. We also rested a while near this spring and drank a great deal of its refreshing water. When we resumed the climb every step meant a weary effort, and it was not till 6 p.m. that we at last reached the Dharmashâlâ at Bhairav Ghati. As usual, this Dharmashâlâ was already full of pilgrims, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we could secure a little space in one of the rooms. The open courtyard was also occupied by pilgrims—mostly Sâdhus—who lighted big fires and flocked round them. Close to the Dharmashâlâ was a temple where a large image of Bhairava or Shiva was worshipped. All around was a thick forest of deodars, which gave beauty and calm to the surroundings. Some of the pilgrims sang in chorus and danced to the accompaniment of drums and other instruments. The chanting of the Sâdhus resounded through the forest and created such a spiritual atmosphere that all the fatigue and difficulties of the journey were forgotten.

We left Bhairav Ghati early next morning for Gangotri which was only six miles away. Our road lay by the side of the Ganges and passed through a thick deodar forest. In the stillness of the early hours the only idea which occupied our minds was the desire to reach Gangotri as soon as possible. As we approached within a mile of Gangotri, we could see the cottages of the Sannyâsins scattered by the side of the Ganges. During the summer months nearly a hundred monks stay at Gangotri in small cottages made of straw and mud, depending on whatever they may get to eat from the Chhatras provided for this purpose. When winter comes and snow begins to fall, the temple of Gangotri is closed and most of the monks go down to warmer places.

(*To be continued*)

SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF ANCIENT INDIAN CULTURE*

By Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D.

It is very difficult to define Hindu culture, though we all have a general idea as to what it means. In general we may regard the culture of the nation as the sum total of its achievements in moral and intellectual spheres. Naturally, most of the ancient cultures have many common elements. At the same time each nation has developed on some special lines, and they constitute the characteristic features of its culture.

An example will make it clear. The ancient Egyptians and Indians were both faced with a common problem. Faced by the inevitable death they both sought for means to avert its effects. The Egyptians came to the conclusion that the best way of preserving the human being is to keep his body intact

* Summary of a lecture delivered at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta.

against any possible fear of dissolution. Hence they invented mummification and built pyramids, lest the royal bodies be stolen away. Starting from the same problem the Indians evolved the idea of a soul behind the body. While the body is liable to decay and dissolution, the soul is immortal, whom the sword cannot cut and the fire cannot burn. It is on the basis of this eternal imperishable soul that Hindu religion has grown up.

Indeed religion forms the chief distinguishing feature of Hindu culture. While other nations looked to the world outside, the Hindus turned their search inwards. While the energy and ingenuity of other races were mostly spent on building up empires, the Hindus devoted their attention to spiritual matters and built up a wonderful system of philosophy. While statecraft formed the main occupation of other peoples, religion permeated the lives of the Hindus.

Hindu religion has some special characteristic features. It does not lay down any particular creed or form of religious belief and practice which must be accepted by all. There is no single text like the Bible or the Quran which contains the fundamental tenets of Hindu religion. In contrast to other religions which lay down definitely that the non-acceptance of their dogmas means eternal perdition, Hinduism is never tired of repeating that the ways of salvation are many and God appears in many forms and is approachable in many ways.

But far more important in my opinion is the fact that Hinduism, alone among all religious systems, frankly recognizes that all men are not morally and intellectually on the same plane and, therefore, should not be made to conform to one set of belief or practice. It, therefore, embraces, within its fold, all forms of belief, from the highest to the lowest, which are adapted to different degrees of mental and moral equipment with a view to their gradual elevation to the highest spiritual truths. As a result we find Hinduism allowing the utmost liberty of thought, which extends even to the conception of God and other ultimate realities. As a matter of fact, the Hindus not only believe in different forms and manifestations of God and different modes of salvation, but some even deny the very existence of God.

But while religion formed the chief and characteristic element of Hindu culture, it would be wrong to suppose that the ancient Idians were all ascetics and every home a mere hermitage. As a matter of fact, Hindu culture recognized the claims of Dharma (religion), Artha (material prosperity), and Kâma (desires) in the life of each individual and sought for their harmonious development without any undue preponderance of any, the ultimate object being, of course, the Moksha or spiritual salvation. The social, political, and economic life in India was conditioned by this unique ideal.

The most characteristic feature of social life was the caste. It was originally brought out by the same realization of inequalities of men's moral and intellectual equipments and attempt at assimilation which led to the catholicity and liberalism of religious ideas, referred to above. India was a land of peoples belonging to various grades of civilization and the caste system was a device to allow each group to develop the best in it without impeding the progress of others and being influenced by the examples of the higher groups. In course of time, however, the means came to be regarded as the end. Forgetting the original motive, the differences of caste were emphasized to such an extent that people ultimately came to regard the preservation of the different groups as the chief concern. The ideas of stability, systematization, and organization, which were the marked features of the Hindu mind, worked on this belief, and the result was the rigid growth of the caste system with its ideas of impurity and untouchability, which latter forms to-day a blot on the Hindu society.

Further, while utmost liberty was given to freedom of thought the most rigorous uniformity was enjoined in respect of social practices. All the activities of man's life even his dress, food, drink, marriage, etc., were controlled to the minutest details, such as can be seen nowhere else in the world. Here again we find a unique characteristic feature of Hindu culture where a man could think as he liked, but could not deviate, by a hair's breadth, in the formal routine laid down for his daily activities. In most other cultures it was just the opposite. One would be burnt or beheaded if he ventured to differ in the slightest degree from the accepted religious dogmas of the land, but nobody would bother about the details of his daily life.

The spirit of organization and systematization led to emphasis on duties rather than rights. The political and economic organizations, based on this principle, led to stability and freedom from competition. But it contained within it the seeds of destruction. The excessive spirit of organization killed individual incentive in arts and crafts, as well as in trade and industry, and the insistence on duties rather than rights led to abuse of political and social power on the part of the kings and the brahmins by the unquestioned obedience which it engendered among the people.

Finally, it may be noted that the harmony of Dharma, Artha, and Kâma yielded to exclusive emphasis on otherworldliness, leading to a degradation of women's position in society, which forms another blot on the Hindu society of later days.

JOY THROUGH SERVICE

By Manu Subedar, M.L.A. (Central), Barrister-at-Law

Mental dissatisfaction, annoyance, boredom, frustration, helplessness, irritation—these appear much too frequently and universally in India and more particularly amongst the educated section. It is, therefore, desirable to probe a little into their causes and to reiterate once more the ancient teachings as to the proper search for real happiness. Happiness is a condition, not of the mind, but of the soul. The mind, which is an instrument and a means only, gets out of control and keeps running after things which are either unattainable, or, if attained, do not yield the joy which they promise. True happiness cannot come so long as its attainment depends on anything external to ourselves. For this we have to turn inside ourselves and cut across the limits of embodied existence now and then, even for a few moments. These ideas are not new. Birth, growth, old age, and death are inevitable. So are the changing conditions of the world around us. It is by dwelling on what is permanent, what is supreme, what is perfect, and by bringing ourselves as near to this as possible, that we can experience the sublime.

It is the unseen cause of things which occur, which one must try to find. An Indian intellect, in comparison with the rest of the world, is the most penetrating, and it ought not to be difficult for any earnest man to look into these unseen causes—these subtle threads—and once that is done, he will not turn to outside events, individuals, or things for real joy. There is something within us, which is unchangeable, which is not shaken by anything which occurs, which is not afraid of anything or anybody, which is deathless, and which is our true existence.

Since it is not possible for any person under modern conditions to keep this central idea before himself all the time,

it is desirable to engage in activities calculated to do good to others and to occupy ourselves for the bulk of the day in such activities. Distress and the crying need of being relieved therefrom were never wanting in India, but at the present moment it is even more than normal. Millions are placed in a situation where they cannot keep body and soul together. In comparison with them, God is kind to us and has given us advantages of resources and intelligence, which we must use for them.

Companionship, friendship, association of intelligent people, are indeed desirable; but we must try to get these on a higher plane, i.e., on the plane of ideas rather than on the physical plane; and on this plane one must be constantly in the company of great thinkers and moral teachers of the world.

Every man is complete within himself if he would only know it. We are like the prince who in his dream is deprived of everything and is begging for a mouthful. The first steps towards getting out of this situation are to go behind diversity of types and catch the essential common thread running in all humanity. In doing something for others, we are apparently turning away from the smaller self, but really working towards the more real Self.

The transition from a normal worldly life involving greed and grasping, frayed tempers, anger, revenge, use of force, injury, and selfishness, to the actual practice of truth, kindliness, unselfishness, joy, benevolence, contentment, and an unruffled existence, is not easy. Tukaram says that every day you have to clean up your mind, i.e., there is no permanent spiritual achievement, but daily care is required to see that it is there. The *Maitreyi Upanishad* says,

> Contemplation of reality in a seeker is the best. Study of the Shâstras is middling. Sâdhanâ by means of Mantras is the lower one. And the least helpful is running about places of pilgrimage. The true joy of Brahman does not come through words without real experience, like the taste of the fruit of a tree, which is reflected in a glass.

The senses of men have been made to turn outside and to recognize the world in outward forms; but, for true joy, for true peace and for true success, one has to turn inside. It is the outstanding greatness of India that in this country this knowledge, not merely as descriptive facts, but as a part of living existence embodying the highest spiritual experiences of thousands of mystics and Rishis, remains; and from this torch transmitted through the ages, millions of new lamps can be lighted. In spite of the terrible deterioration through the contact with the West, India still has the largest number of men living in Sattva and in contemplation and selflessness.

Western thought, often brilliant, stops short of the final reality. Emerson says that no man need permit any external event to disturb him; but this is only possible when, by constant practice and deep faith a man has stabilized his intelligence. The tradition in India was to strive for four objects, viz, Dharma, Artha, Kâma, and Moksha. Artha and Kâma came in to the full extent, but within given channels and modified by the other two objects. In particular, Dharma was the instrument for the stability of society, where an individual exists in the midst of other individuals. In other words, the tenets of good conduct were derived from those who believed in a common and universal benefit. While leaving to the individual a royal road to the highest achievement and realization, Indian thought kept clear of exalted egotism of the Superman behind the teachings of Nietzsche. For the many, there was a hope of betterment and a direction for balanced and correct existence; and for the few more advanced, more fortunately placed in life commanding greater advantages, there was a clear sense of obligation. There is no word corresponding to the word 'right' in the Sanskrit language or in any of the vernaculars derived therefrom. There are many words indicating obligation or duty. Crude socialism, collectivism, and communism of the West would hardly appeal to an Indian

mind, because there are other simpler, less disturbing, less onerous methods of achieving greater results than those, which these imperfect Western social systems and ideas have produced, or can produce.

These traditions and this atmosphere have now seriously deteriorated in India through the malignant inroad of Western influences, not merely through their books, literature, cinema, but in the reported magnificence of life there and in the hypocritical and false models of Western men and women, who have come to India. Western life based often on a selfish search for material objects, on grasping, on the unabashed use of violence and force, on opportunism, on hypocrisy and immediate cleverness, has now produced in Europe a ghastly result, destroying every consideration in the dealings of man with man. European civilization is based on the exploitation of five continents by various European countries during the last four hundred years. They took away much. They made others work for them. Now all that ill-gotten material wealth is being destroyed by the unseen hand of destiny as a Nemesis. They have unblushingly laid aside the lesson, which Jesus Christ put before them two thousand years ago, but that lesson is sure to reappear. Some faint and indistinct words have already emerged from the mouths of the opportunist Prime Ministers and Presidents and War Lords in their declarations of New Order, reconstruction, charter of human freedom, etc. But there is still lacking that honest homage to truth, which alone can lead to a better world. Holland is praying for its freedom, but is saying nothing about the freedom of the people of Java. The same can be said of other countries on both sides in this world war. It is not yet realized that you must go to God with clean hands. Whether the people of Europe will emerge out of this cataclysm with a new sense of human relationship, in which, not Artha, but Dharma will be dominant, it is difficult to say, but, for the people of India there is a clear object lesson. There is a clear demonstration that there is stability, joy, and success only in one direction. It is a clear proof that the teachings of the Rishis, which are the heritage of India, went deeper into human nature and were based on divine revelations. Not only the problem of India, but the problem of the world could be solved only in that way and in that direction.

It is not merely in the negative form that non-enmity and tolerance are to be cultivated. It is a positive love for humanity. It is a sense of fellow-feeling and common brotherhood, which is wanted. In the West, everybody thinks of himself, always blames others, and talks of democracy as if it were something external. The roots of human freedom and democracy arise from inside and not from outside. When the seed is properly sown, the tree bears leaves and yields fruits. These leaves and fruits are in charity, i.e., giving help to those who are physically or in resources inferior to ourselves, in short in undertaking tasks, which benefit the many. The teachings of the Gita on this subject are very clear, as will be seen from the following:

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन । VI. 32.

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति । XVIII. 61.

येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥ IV. 35.

सर्वभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥ V. 7.

यत्र चैवात्मनाऽऽत्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥ VI.20.

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयः स्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामंत एव च ॥ X. 20.

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान् संसारेषु नराधमान् ।
क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥ XIV. 19.

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः। IX. 29.

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् । XIII. 27.

समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु । XVIII. 54.

पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः । V. 28.

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो XV. 15.

तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय। IX. 6.

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति । VI. 30.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि । VI. 29.

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां । XII. 18.

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते । XVIII. 20.

ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः । XII. 4.

Shankaracharya in his *Shatashloki* also says the same :

एको भानुस्तदन्थः प्रतिफलनवशाद्यस्त्वनेकोदकान्तः
नानात्वं यात्युपाधिस्थितिगतिसमतां चापि
सद्वत्परात्मा ।
भूतेष्वावचेषु प्रतिफलित इवाभाति तावत्स्वभावा-
वच्छिन्नो यः परन्तु स्फुटमनुपहतो भासते
तैः स्वभावैः ॥
भूतेष्वात्मानमात्मन्यनुगतमखिलं भूतजातं प्रपश्येत्
प्रायः पाथस्तरङ्गान्वयवदथ चिरं सर्वमात्मैव पश्येत् ।
एकं ब्रह्माद्वितीयं श्रुतिशिरसि मतं नेह नानास्ति
किञ्चिन्मृत्योराप्नोति मृत्युं स इह जगदिदं यस्तु
नानेव पश्येत् ॥

It will be seen in this manner that real happiness lies in removing the unhappiness of others as far as it lies within our power. Real joy comes from extending one's thoughts and cares to others placed in life at some disadvantage compared to us. The application of this inside a family, inside a village, city, group, or country, has been the keynote of the life of all the great men, which humanity has produced. That is the broad and central road along which an individual can experience joy. At the root of this, is the great doctrine of essentially common humanity, along which alone a stable new world order for humanity can be created. In India it is imperative for every one to broaden his outlook and to reject ideas that contain and promote diversities and differences. Unselfish men devoted to the service of others provide a sound foundation for building up human life.

LIMITATIONS OF BEHAVIOURISM

By Prof. D. N. Sharma, M.A.

All along the ages science has laid great stress on 'perception' as the final criterion of the 'reality' or existence of an entity. To see is to believe. In the first flush of victory gained as a result of a wide and comprehensive knowledge of the perceptual world, the mid-Victorian Science made aggressive and, at times, undignified encroaches on the realm of 'remoter charms by thought supplied' or interests 'unborrowed from the eye'. It arrogated to itself the privilege of saying the last word on the reality of existence and claimed to 'see into the life of things', which, according to its professions did not extend beyond 'what meets the eye'. The main tendency of science has been to form a materialistic outlook of life. Materialism owes its origin, and derives sustenance from, three principal sources. The physicist regards *matter* as the first cause of the universe; the biologist attributes to *natural selection* all subsequent change and development; the behaviourist seeks the aid of *conditioned reflex* to explain all human activity.

The investigations of some eminent physicists of to-day encourage one to believe that materialism is beating a quick retreat before the ever-progressive forces of spiritualism. They leave little room for doubt that science has already taken long and quick strides on the way to spiritualizing itself. Even the modern biologists are falling in line with the view that evolutionary development is attributed to a creative energy—*elan vital*—which is at the back and root of all change. It is, however,

strange to note that this reaction has been accompanied by a parallel current of another forceful reaction (in the reverse direction) in the domain of psychology. Under the influence of classical biology, a section of the psychologists have achieved remarkable success in interpreting human behaviour without reference to the mind as its cause or origin. The organism and its environment are deemed sufficient to explain all possibilities of human behaviour and to give a detailed and exhaustive account of its expression. Human action, according to this theory, is not the effect of deliberation, choice, or initiative on the part of a conscious agent, but merely a reaction, or a set of reactions, to a situation or combination of situations. With the advance of years, and a repetition of these reactions in multifarious forms, simple reactions develop into chain-reflexes and conditioned reflexes. The mind finds no place in the picture of human activity. It is a 'mere' halo that surrounds reflexes; it is an incidental accompaniment; it is a 'superfluous' phenomenon which may be said to be present, but which certainly does not and cannot get into, alter or affect the series of reflexes. The conditioned reflex holds the key to all the intricate problems that were previously attributed to the agency of the mind. It claims to have broken asunder the Gordian knot of the almost insoluble problem of human life and its expression. The conditioned reflex has thus been exalted to the pedestal hitherto occupied with honour and distinction by the mind.

Behaviourism is biology applied to psychology. That it has achieved undreamt of success in interpreting human behaviour, goes without saying. It has yielded still more definite and fruitful results when applied to practical life, for instance, in the education of children and reformation of criminals. It starts with the undeniable hypothesis that the human organism is a part of the physical universe and obeys its laws. From this unassailable ground it goes forward to adopt a most contentious position that the concept of the mind should be scrupulously excluded from all discussion of human behaviour. This mechanistic conception of life has reduced human behaviour to a set of regularized and systematized series of movements determined by the co-ordination of the organism and the environment. The two being given, we can calculate, with mathematical precision, the future course of the life of an individual. 'Give me a healthy normal new-born babe and I can mould him into anything you like,' says a behaviourist. Even the so-called 'higher activities' of man are so many forms and varieties assumed by the all-embracing and self-sufficing conditioned reflex. The causeway between the simple reflex and conditioned reflex is built up of certain processes. Frequency and recency are the two important factors which greatly help in this development. Successful movements recently performed are stamped in, the unsuccessful ones are stamped out. The successful movements repeated too often form a strong link in the series of chain-reflexes. The law of association weaves these reflexes into a vast tapestry of countless connections whose intricacies and complexities are at times bewildering and perplexing. In short, the behaviouristic theory builds up relations between stimuli from the external world and reactions of the organism. Even the most highly developed activity can be interpreted in terms of their interaction. The body in itself constitutes the perfect human being.

Nobody will challenge the obvious fact that most of the activities of the child develop by the operation of the laws of recency and frequency. His early vocabulary owes its birth and growth to these factors. Again, mechanical vocabulary is but a specialized form of conditioned reflex. A good memory undoubtedly presupposes a richness and wealth of associations. So far, so good. But there are processes other than these which it would be

hard, if not impossible, to explain on the behaviouristic theory. (A) A child learns not only words but sentences.

> The use of single words, as opposed to sentences, is wholly explicable, so far as I can see, by the principles which apply to animals in the mazes. . . . But sentences introduce new considerations and are not quite so easily explained on behaviourist lines. (Russell).

Of course, the child begins with words, but he does not take long to speak sentences.

> My daughter advanced very quickly to sentences, in which there was hardly ever an error. At the age of eighteen months, when supposed to be sleeping, she was overheard saying to herself: 'Last year I used to dive off the diving board, I did.' (Russell).

The use of sentences implies the ability to understand and manipulate form and structure. Certainly this is more than behaviourism. (B) Kohler's 'insight' theory, which has come to stay and cannot be easily explained away, is another challenge to the behaviourist. His general contention is that

> genuine solutions of problems do not improve by repetition ; they are perfect on the first occasion, and, if anything, grow worse by repetition, when the excitement of discovery has worn off.

How often do we hear people exclaiming with a sense of self-pride, 'Oh, it came to me in a flash !' Certainly insight is opposed to conditioned reflex.

Behaviourists challenge the validity of 'thinking' as a process independent of bodily movements. According to them, what we term thinking in fact comprises of the movements of the muscles in the larynx together with incipient movements in the hands, in the viscera, and indeed all over the body. Thinking is simply talking 'under one's breath'. Emotion, too, is interpreted on similar lines.

> If we fancy some strong emotion, and then try to abstract from our consciousness of it all the feelings of its bodily symptoms, we find we have nothing left behind, no 'mind-stuff' out of which the emotion can be constituted, and that a cold and neutral state of intellectual perception is all that remains. . . . The more closely I scrutinize my states, the more persuaded I become that whatever 'coarse' affections and passions I have are in very truth constituted by, and made up of those bodily changes which we ordinarily call their expression or consequence. (James).

This involves us in a rather difficult discussion as to the exact nature of 'bodily movements'. Are they mere 'accompaniments' and 'expressions' of more basic mental facts or do they constitute in themselves independent and ultimate facts of human life—the ways in which the human organism behaves under the influence of the stimuli emanating from the outside world? That it is possible to study 'expression' without reference to the underlying 'reality' or 'realities', is not only true but at times justifiable. An average man need not worry himself, for instance, about the electrons and protons (the constituent elements of all physical objects) while manipulating and making use of the numerous objects that he employs in his daily life; here, perhaps, it might be appropriate to say that it is folly to be wise where ignorance is bliss. The knowledge that the pen with which I am writing is, in fact, a combination of electrons and protons, can give me neither additional consolation nor add to the efficiency of my work. The study or discovery of electrons, it may be added, has not changed or modified the use or efficacy of explosive matters and made them different from what they were before. A chemist may profitably proceed on with his daily experiments irrespective of the fact whether matter is composed of *electrons* or *atoms*, whether motion is *inherent* in them or is *imparted* to them by some external force; whether their combination is a matter of *chance* or is the resultant-effect of some *purposive activity* behind them, so long as this combination does take place. He has to manipulate, for some practical purposes, material objects—*they* are his starting point. How *they* can best serve his purpose is his ideal. The knowledge as to how they came into being or what constitutes their reality

or else why they assumed the form they actually did, will not even slightly alter his treatment of them. All these things, however, do matter to a physicist. To the behaviourist expression may justifiably be and is the be-all and end-all of his inquiry; but for him to say that they constitute the whole of our being, is more than he is entitled to do by the nature and requirement of his science.

Let us take the case of poetry. It is the language of passion or emotion. But genesis of this passion is a 'serene and blessed mood in which the affections gently lead us on' and 'our corporeal frame almost suspended, we are laid asleep in body, and become a living soul'. The spontaneous flow of such an imaginative experience is poetry. Now poetry, once it has found expression in verse and rhythm, lends itself to the rules and laws of prosody, grammar, language, and thought. The expression, i.e., the musical language of the poet, can now be studied from various points of view, determined by practical necessity or even by some theoretical urge, without our merging ourselves into a similar poetic mood which was originally responsible for the creation of that poetry. We need not get into that state to understand the verse. Expression thus has its own laws, even when it is completely divorced from its source. It would, however, be absurd to suggest that versification is poetry or that expression is reality. To understand poetry one must virtually become a poet himself.

Only a poet can understand a poet. (Swinburne).

Expression can do a great many things; it can delight us by its thought, similes, metaphors, music; but it cannot do one thing—it cannot take the place of the original experience itself. At best it points towards that. That chemical action (a visible expression of life) is taking place in all parts of our organism, is not proof sufficient to assert that life is made up, or is the result of, chemical action; no chemical action by itself can produce life. That A always accompanies B is no proof of the identity of A with B. The moon causes the tides, but the moon is not the tides. Expression of an event cannot be the event itself.

Bodily movements can be studied and controlled independently as if there were no mind which caused them. This fact, by itself, does not guarantee the inference or validate the conclusion that there is no mind. The mere fact that the mind is either not an object of perception or investigation, or if it were, its experience is private to the man who undertakes it, is no proof of its non-existence. The difficulties to know it may not be easy to be obviated. Yet only a perverse intellect would go so far as to conclude from this negative and imperfect proof, amounting to ignorance, that there is no mind. Introspection, the method of knowing the mind, may present at times insoluble difficulties and may damp the enthusiasm of the impatient. Yet it is our sole guide in grasping certain facts which are of vital interest to mankind. It will not be without interest to know the views of Russell (whose sympathies for behaviourism are so well known) on the scope of introspection—a word most disliked by the behaviourists, being fatal to their theory.

Finally, we come to imaginations, hallucinations, and dreams. In all these cases, we may suppose that there is an external stimulus, but the cerebral part of the causal chain is unusual, so that there is not in the outside world something connected with what we are imagining in the same way as in normal perception. Yet in such case we can quite clearly know what is happening in us ; we can for example, often remember our dreams. I think dreams must count as 'thought', in the sense that they lie outside physics. They may be accompanied by movements ; but *knowledge of them is not knowledge of these movements*. Indeed, all knowledge as to movements of matter is inferential ; and the knowledge which a scientific man should take as constituting his primary data, is more like our knowledge of dreams than our knowledge of the movements of rats or heavenly bodies. To this extent, I should say, Descartes is in the right as against Watson. Watson's position

seems to rest upon naive realism as regards the physical world; but naive realism is destroyed by what physics itself has to say concerning physical causation and the antecedents of our perceptions. On these grounds I hold that *self-observation can and does give us knowledge which is not part of physics, and that there is no reason to deny the reality of 'thought'.*

If behaviourism be taken as a final theory, all morality will be reduced to a mere sham. Morality has for its basis human responsibility. Behaviourism lends support to determinism, and is in flagrant contradiction with the higher aspirations of man to overcome all limitations with a view to seeking complete enfranchisement and mastery of the environment. A man of will carries his own environment with him, or else he adapts the changing environment to suit his own needs and requirements. I shall, however, dismiss this argument as it stands in need of proof, based as it is more on the inherent desire of man to be free rather than on some logical foundations. The problem of choice, however, has a distinct psychological importance and significance as contrasted with the merely ethical treatment of the question. That man is capable of making a choice by favouring one alternative rather than the other, in the face of equally strong and favourite stimuli contending for supremacy—being simultaneously conscious of the fact that *he could, if he liked*, choose the other—is a matter of common experience. That an individual has been converted from an evil course merely by choosing the contradictory path or that an individual has deliberately shaken off a habit with a grim determination, are facts within the knowledge of all. These are hard nuts to crack for any deterministic theory, whose bark flounders on the bedrock of free-will and choice.

Whatever the origin of human energy, it flows into three definite channels—action, thought, and creation. On these three, action is the simplest and most primitive. It is the axis round which the other two move. But action must be differentiated from mere movement. Movements have a similarity and regularity which are indicative of the mechanistic functioning of the organism. Given an organism and the circumstances with which it is surrounded, it is always safe to predict, with a reasonable approach to accuracy, what movement is going to result from their interaction. When we take into consideration movement, our starting point is the organism. But human action is so varied that it allows a wide range of well-marked differences, which are not merely incidental but characteristic and essential. We observe these differences not among different human beings, but unlike stereotyped uniformity observed in automata, there is a bewildering diversity in the actions of the same man. Every man is a problem in himself. He is more than an organism. He is an individual. The starting point for psychology is the *individual*. Action varies from man to man and in the same man from time to time. This variation is determined not so much by the stimuli working on him as by the individuality of the agent. 'Man issues forth in action' is a far truer statement than 'action determines the man'. Man is not at the mercy of the stimuli external to him. When in his best form, he acts on them and employs them to suit his own purposes; he can accept them or brush them aside contemptuously if their intrusion looks like proving detrimental to his well-being. He meets them with a consciousness of his never-failing capacity to get their assistance in serving his own ends. The conditioned reflex theory blindly ignores the one supreme fact of what happens between the 'incoming' of the stimulus and the 'out-going' of the response. Something is going on in the 'mind'. It is sifting, arranging, analysing, accepting, rejecting, taking sides, and finally issuing orders with a clear consciousness of the possible consequences which he strives for and anticipates. He *grasps the significance* of the situation, and meets it not as a

helpless victim but with the avowed object of winning a victory over it. Not the whole battalion of behaviourists, if they held a conference in the cells of the brain, could discover processes resembling these.

Thought is not a mere 'halo' round the action of man; it is its core, its innermost being, its inspirer, its creator; it is the urge, the impulse, and the motive of action. Action is invariably accompanied with thought. Thought preceds, proceeds with, and exceeds action. It is an insult to the human intelligence to be told that thought is a form of mechanical reaction. It is aggressive and intruding. It takes the initiative and sets up new problems even in the absence of external stimuli. As to creation, the behaviourists' attempt to regard it as mere 'manipulation' of objects, is ridiculous on the face of it. If it is at all manipulation, it is a manipulation of 'ideas', another term which is to a behaviourist what a red rag is to a bull. They must indeed be victims of deplorable ignorance who stubbornly persist in pressing the claim of 'stimuli' in the domain of creation. They hopelessly confuse it with 're-grouping' or 're-arranging' or 'set-formations' or 'pattern-formations'. Even in these activities, the idea of a pattern or a frame-work, a grasp of the whole in which the parts have to be fitted in or arranged, is involved; and certainly all these are beyond the range of the stimuli. As for creation proper, something descends on man or 'comes' to man and is acclaimed with an outburst, 'Oh, I have got it.' The marshalling of facts, cataloguing them, arranging and manipulating them, are activities which are usually present in the activities even of ordinary individuals. These, along with the synthetic faculty of pattern-forming—the sublime virtue granted to the chosen few of 'hitting upon' a plan or design—and the bringing into existence of new forms and shapes, have the least to do with reflexes which have blindness as their characteristic. Blind reflexes cannot be the parent of productive, reconstructive, much less of creative, activities. Intelligent action, deliberative thought, and creative genius exalt a man from an ordinary individual to a personality with a strong will and with a central purpose in life. Such personalities are not only the products of their times but are the creators of new values and builders of a new generation.

Behaviourism is perfectly scientific so far as it goes. But it cannot go far enough. It has failed to grasp personality as a whole. Nobody would like to challenge its authority in the sphere where it is at home. When, however, it goes forward to refute the existence of the mind, we would like to retort: 'Realize your limitations and mind your own business, please!'

You see many stars at night in the sky but find them not when the sun rises; can you say that there are no stars in the heaven of day? So, O man, because you behold not God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God.

As fishes playing in a pond covered over with reeds and scum cannot be seen from outside, so God plays invisible in the heart of man, being screened by Mâyâ from human view.

—Sri Ramakrishna

SOCRATES REBORN

By Shiv Kumar Shastri, M.A., M.Sc. (London), Bar-at-Law

I

One day Socrates rose from his grave and thus spake unto himself :

'O Thou All-pervading Essence of Life, Thou Master Spirit that permeateth the world, Thou Great Self that challengeth God,

salutations !

O Great God of the Universe, Thou that art here, there, everywhere, and nowhere, Thou that createth and destroyeth Thyself,

salutations !

O Great Self, Thou inspirest Thyself. Thou livest in Thy creatures, yet runnest away from them. Thou livest in us, yet art difficult to find.

My reverent salutations to Thee.'

Presently a Voice rose within Socrates and thus spake unto him :

'Thou hast arisen, Socrates, at my behest. Too long hast thou slept. The world that I created hath forgotten itself. It runneth after false gods. Arise and proclaim everywhere thou goest that those that battle for religious ideas are no longer my servants. Announce thy home-coming with my Spirit—the Spirit of the Universe.'

And Socrates thus reflected :

'I must travel and observe all peoples and all lands. I must proclaim the voice of Reason and of Chastened Spirit. I must raise the dead to new life. Mankind is now dead, for mankind liveth on hatred and fear.'

The Voice again murmured :

'Socrates, I charge thee first to solve the greatest riddle of life. To the Aryas did I give the greatest knowledge of life. I planted them on earth to spread reason and understanding. I gave them the qualities of supermen.

But they are dead.

The Aryas did I first create. I gave them the power to comprehend my essence. I charged them never to forget my works.

But they are dead.

To the Aryas I gave the torch of life. I bade them to be my servants on earth. I gave them minds, Socrates, such as I have given thee.

But alas, they are dead.

I gave them my own Spirit. I lived in them. They lived in Me.

But they are now dead.

Socrates, this do I require of thee. Go unto the land of the Aryas and study the causes of their death. If among them there be some that still live, charge them to raise the mantle of their forefathers in the present and in the hereafter.'

And Socrates thus spake unto himself :

'Verily the Voice that speaketh in me lays new snares for me. It chargeth me to study the downfall of the most ancient of peoples possessed with the most ancient of knowledge. Knoweth it not itself the causes of this downfall? It speaketh of the Aryas as Its servants on earth. Forsooth all Its creatures are Its servants on earth.'

But the Voice continued :

'Socrates, doubt thou not my word. I know the unknown and the known. For I live in all times and in all beings. I create the good and I create the bad. I am the father of virtue. I am also the father of evil. I speak not Myself, for Myself I live not except in all beings. I cannot lead except through the led. When I am passive the world dieth. When I am active virtue and evil quarrel. Tell the Aryas to rise from their sleep, Socrates, as thou hast arisen. Charge them to have no fear and mis-

giving for My Will and Spirit are again with them.'

And Socrates rose and walked unto the land of the Aryas.

II

Socrates walked in many cities and met many people. One day he walked far and came unto a village and yonder he observed a great crowd listening in silence to the words of a holy man.

Socrates went near and mingled in the crowd.

'Thus I teach you the meaning of your Karma,' said the holy man. 'I say unto you: Be contented with your lot. Your misery you reap for your evils of the past. Be virtuous and pray for better lives to come. God listens to your prayer for He is kind and benificent.'

Thus saying the holy man finished. But Socrates waited not for the crowd to disperse. He mounted the rostrum and thus spake unto them:

'O ye Aryas, lend me your ears, for I bring unto you the message of your Old Spirit. You will listen to me, for in your faces I see the innocence of simplicity.'

As Socrates spake there was a murmur of surprise in the crowd. Some of them shouted at this interference. But the holy man who was regarding Socrates intently all the time quietened them with a wave of his arm and said: 'I charge you to listen to this man. In his eyes I see the gleam of Parashurâma; in his demeanour the confidence of Vedavyâsa; in his smile the immortal look of Vishvâmitra. Verily he cometh with a message from the Rishis. Proceed, O thou unknown one. I will listen to you as my disciples listen to me.'

And Socrates continued his discourse.

'I teach unto you the mysteries of true Karma. Alas, you see a red light when it existeth not! You see in Karma a commandment when it existeth not. Profound is the error and deep also the suffering. Remember, Karma commandeth not, it explaineth. If you reap for the past you must not forget also to sow for the future. Karma taught you not to wait and suffer. It taught you to act and surmount.

'It teacheth us to conquer, not to succumb.

'O you hapless ones, how can you blame Karma when you test it not? How can you blame Karma when you act not?

'You live in misery and subjection and you call it Karma. The cause of your misery is your subjection, the cause of your subjection is your sloth. Thus explaineth Karma. You must see Karma in its true meaning. If it explaineth the present it teacheth the future. Thus you must always think of Karma: "My Karma will I not blame until myself I can blame no further."

'If in your food you see a bee, blame not Karma but chase it away. If in your room you discover a serpent, blame not Karma but chase it away. If your land is invaded by a swarm of pests, blame not Karma but chase it away. Those that seek to make slaves of you, you must chastize. Thus teacheth Karma. If you chastize not, blame not Karma for your slavery.

'Where you suffer from the mystical forces of Spirit and Nature, there Karma commandeth. Where you suffer from the actions of men like yourselves, there, O you Aryas, command you yourselves. Your misery, O you Aryas, is man made. How can you blame Karma for what is man-made? Invoke Karma where you are helpless, but blame not Karma when you can act.

'This I say unto you: Think not of Karma until you are free[1]. And wait not for that freedom. *Achieve it.*'

As Socrates paused for breath the holy man suddenly rushed forward and embraced him.

'O sage from nowhere,' he said, 'thou art indeed our Old Spirit. We hermits have long waited for thy coming. But beware. Not all of them will believe in

[1] Free, i.e., from the passions and cupidities of life.

what thou say'st. "An impostor!"—thus thou might be known.'

'Fear not,' answered Socrates. 'I know too well the ire of the petty and the jealous. I know it well for I died once as its victim.

'Unbending is my purpose and unbending my will. I speak not for myself but for Him whom thou callest thy Spirit. In every house, in every village, in every town will I proclaim the resurgence of your Old Spirit.

'I charge you to believe in me, for He hath given me His mandate. I am the messenger of the Infinite. Infinite is my patience, infinite my zeal, and infinite my enthusiasm. Believe in me. For I am come here as your friend and I say unto you again:

'Karma is the mysterious fire that lighteth only those that light themselves. It runneth away from those that would burden it with their useless weight. Those that shower on it their own shortcomings will reach it not. Those that seek from it a support for their own timidity will reach it not. Those that seek in it a prop for their complacency will reach it not.

'Karma looketh only on those that seek to climb. Climb ye all to the highest mountains, yea, even to the peak of the sacred Himalayas. Those that reach the peak know their Karma. Those that reach not the peak also know their Karma. But, alas! how will you know Karma if you seek not to climb at all? Seek you Karma in peril, for peril is the abode of Karma. Yea, peril, danger, and death are the abode of Karma for those that are not free.

'Seek not security. For security cometh after freedom.

'Seek not happiness. For happiness cometh after freedom.

'Fools! how will you achieve security and happiness without freedom? For freedom *is* security and happiness.

'Better be dead than alive under those that hate you. Better still if you fight than die without fighting.

'But be you not disheartened. I will teach you how to fill yourselves with power and glory.

'*Be United*. Thus runneth the message of your old ancestors.

'Battle you not with each other, for you destroy your Spirit, which is *One*.

'Hark, the *great hour of freedom* cometh. Prepare yourselves for its coming, for you will be *free*.'

THE GILGIT MANUSCRIPTS OF BUDDHISM

By Bhikshu Brahmabodhi

The Buddhist manuscripts recently unearthed at Gilgit have made Gilgit known widely in the Buddhist countries, and in fact, in the cultural world. Gilgit which lies 34° north of the Equator in the north-western corner of Kashmir, is 231 miles from Srinagar via Bandipur and is approachable on horseback within a week. It has an elevation of 4,890 feet above the sea level. There is a bazaar, a post and telegraph office, a dispensary as well as a British cantonment and fort. Gilgit is a subdivision of Dardistan[1], one of the three frontier districts of the Kashmir State. The place being very important owing to its situation in the frontier, there is a British Political Agency. The inhabitants of this place are called, Dards, believed to be the descendants of Aryans. The physical features of the Dards somewhat resemble those of Kashmiris. They look crafty and are hardy, brave, and tall. Some of them are fair-complexioned and good-looking. The Indus flows 150 miles through this country. In the northern tract apri-

[1] Dardistan is surrounded on the north by the Karakoram and Hindukush mountains and Pamir, on the east by Baltistan, on the west by Yagistan and on the south by Kashmir.

cots, walnuts, poplars, willows, etc., and nearly all the fruits of Kashmir are to be found. The place is as hot as the Punjab in the summer but severely cold in the winter. Grass and timber are scarce on its rocky soil. Little corn-fields are seen in the outskirts of villages. The chief agricultural products are wheat, barley, and Indian corn that do not grow well in this barren land. Kafirstan which is now a province of Afghanistan originally belonged to Dardistan.

The people of Gilgit are Mahommedans of both Shia and Sunni sects. 'The chiefs of Gilgit,' observes P. Ananda Kaul in his *Geography of Jammu and Kashmir State*, 'living as they were in mountain fastnesses, were in olden days notorious for carrying on raids into neighbouring countries with impunity.' In the time of the Moghuls, Gilgit was under the suzerainty of Kashmir and during the reign of the Afghans, several neighbouring chiefs took it by turns; and no sooner did one occupy it than he was killed by his rival. During the Sikh period Mahommed Khan was its ruler, but he was overthrown by Suleiman Shah, chief of Yasin. Suleiman Shah was murdered by Azad Khan, chief of Punial, who was again killed by Tabar Shah, chief of Nagar. Tabar Shah was succeeded by his son Sikander Khan, but Gauhar Aman, son of Suleiman Shah killed Sikandar and usurped his throne. In 1842 A.D. Sikandar's brother Karim Khan sought the help of Gulam Mohiuddin, a Sikh governor of Kashmir, against his enemy. The latter sent troops under Nathu Shah and Mathradas to Gilgit to assist Karim. Gauhar Khan being defeated by the Kashmir troops fled to Punial. Karim Khan then became the ruler of Gilgit. Nathu Shah remained with him to see that he was not molested, and Mathradas returned to Kashmir. Nathu Shah made friendship with several neighbouring chiefs by marrying the daughter of Gauhar Aman to himself and the daughters of Hunza and Nagar chiefs to his sons.

In 1845 after the break-up of Sikh rule, Nathu Shah was appointed by Gulab Singh as the governor of Gilgit and two European officers accompanied him there. The chief of Hunza got jealous of him for bringing European officers and murdered him with Karim Khan. Gauhar Aman invaded Gilgit again, but Maharaja Gulab Singh's[2] troops sent from Kashmir defeated him. Bhup Singh and Sant Singh, two commanding officers of Maharaja Gulab Singh ruled over Gilgit peacefully for some time; but they were again attacked and defeated by Gauhar Aman's sons, and Gauhar Aman again became the sole master of Gilgit. After the death of Gauhar Aman in 1856 A.D. Maharaja Ranbir Singh of Kashmir (son of Gulab Singh) deputed General Devi Singh with a large force to reconquer Gilgit. The enemy ran away and Devi Singh occupied Gilgit. In 1859 Mulk Aman, son of Gauhar Aman, revolted; so Maharaja Ranbir Singh despatched a punitive force to punish him, and Gilgit was permanently annexed to the Kashmir State. The chiefs of Hunza and Nagar, though tributory to Kashmir often gave trouble to the Maharaja's troops at Gilgit. So in December, 1891, these two principalities were subjugated by Colonel A. Durand, the then British Political Agent at Gilgit.

The above short account gives a rough idea of the geography and history of Gilgit enough for our purpose. Now let us trace the career of Buddhism in Kashmir, reputed to be the cradle of Sanskrit Buddhism. The credit of Kashmir not only lies in being an important academic centre for the development of Buddhist philosophy, but also for the dissemination of Buddhism to countries abroad. In the post-Kushan period, Kashmir had direct road-communication with Tushar,

[2] By a treaty with the British Government, made in 1847, Gulab Singh became the Maharaja of Kashmir. See K. M. Pannikar's *Gulab Singh* for further details.

Khotan, and Tibet, and much of Indian thought and culture was propagated there by the Kashmirian monks during the reign of Minar and Imasya. In the Buddhist Texts, Kashmir is mentioned as one of the sixteen Mahajanapadas. The Chinese Buddhist records of the third or fourth century A.D. use the Chinese term 'Kipin' for Kashmir. According to the *Mahavamsa*, the Ceylonese chronicle, Majjhantika was sent to Kashmir to preach the Dhamma by Moggaliputta Tissa, the religious adviser of Ashoka. Majjhantika *alias* Madhyantika, a disciple of Ananda, resided in Kashmir for twenty years and succeeded very much in converting a large number of the local people into Buddhism. The author of *Mahavamsa* observes that, from that time up to the fifth century A.D., Kashmir continued to be illumined by yellow robes. The same tradition is recorded with slight variation in the Tibetan Dulva (i.e., Vinaya Pitaka of the Sarvastivadins). Yuan Chwang, the famous Chinese traveller, who visited Kashmir in 631 A.D., stayed in Jayendra Vihara and received instructions in various Shâstras. This Vihara, which was built during the reign of King Prabarasen II, by his maternal uncle Jayendra, contained a colossal statue of Buddha known as Brihadbuddha. But this Vihara was burnt down and destroyed by Khemagupta (950-8 A.D.). Srinagar, which is the summer capital of Kashmir, was established by Ashoka in third century B.C., and Buddhism spread steadily in Kashmir through his imperial patronage. There is a Buddhist tradition that on account of some difference of opinion with the Theravadins, the Sarvastivadin monks left Magadha and came to Kashmir, where they settled on the hills and the valleys. On hearing this, Ashoka became very sorry and requested the monks to return to Magadha, but on their refusal built for them 500 monasteries in Kashmir and gave up all Kashmir for the benefit of the local Buddhist Church. Kalhan,[3] the famous historian of Kashmir, writes that Ashoka not only built Srinagar but also covered Suskaletra and Vitastra with numerous Buddhist Stupas, one of which was so high that its pinnacle could not be seen. Yuan Chwang noticed in Kashmir four Ashokan topes, each of which contained relics of Buddha's body. The *Nilamata-purâna*, another famous chronicle of Kashmir, also describes how Buddhism became predominant in Kashmir. After Ashoka's demise Buddhism fell on evil days, as his successors (232-185 B.C.) showed an anti-Buddhistic spirit, but the Dharma survived in North-west India through the patronage of the Saka-Yavanas and the Kushans. In the reign of Kanishka again it recovered its lost glory and came to the forefront of Indian religions. During the rule of Kanishka and his successors Buddhism enjoyed the most prosperous time all over North India, especially in Gandhara and Kashmir. Kanishka and his successors Hushka, Jushka, and Kanishka II belonged to the Turashka race; but they embraced Buddhism and patronized the faith very much like Qublai Khan the Moghul Emperor. In the reign of Kanishka, the Fourth Buddhist Council was held in Kashmir. The Council was held in Kundalavana Vihara, in which 500 Arhats, 500 Bodhisattvas, and 500 Pandits took part. In this Council, Taranath observes, King Simha of Kashmir was converted to Buddhism, was ordained as an Arhat having the name Sudarsan and preached the religion in Kashmir. Yuan Chwang records that in this Council several expository commentaries on the Sutra-Vinaya and Abhidharma were written and called *Upadesha-shâstras*, and *Vibhâsa-shâstras* in which the original texts and their different interpretations were discussed. The same Chinese traveller adds that King Kanishka had all the treatises written on copper plates

[3] See English translation of ***Râjatarangini*** by Sir Aurel Stein, I, p. 19, or the English translation by R. S. Pandit called ***The River of Kings.***

and had them enclosed in stone boxes and deposited in a Stupa made specially for the purpose. It was ordained by a stone inscription that no portion of the Abhidharma text and its *Vibhâsa* should go out of the country. *Vibhâsa-shâstra* is so associated with Kashmir that it is called *Kashmir-shi* in Chinese. This Shâstra is the great contribution of Kashmir to Buddhism. Yuan Chwang says that 'there is evidence of great study and research in these Shâstras, and in them we find extraordinary insight into the Buddhistic lore of various kinds and also into the Brahminical learning, the Indian alphabets, Vedas, and their Angas'.

The composition of *Vibhâsa-shâstra* proves that Kashmir became a prominent academic centre for Buddhistic studies and research, and from the time of Kanishka many distinguished teachers and writers of Buddhism lived in Kashmir. Vasumitra, to whom is attributed the authorship of the *Pancha-vastu-vibhâsa-shâstra*, *Samyuktâbhi-dharma-hridaya-shâstra*, etc., is a famous figure of Kashmir. The Sautrantika teacher Shrilabha was an inhabitant of Kashmir. He was a disciple of Kunal. Samghabhadra was another Kashmirian Âchârya, a profound scholar of the *Vibhâsa-shâstra* of the Sarvastivadin school. He wrote a commentary on Vasumitra's *Prakaranpâda* and was the author of *Abhidharmâvatara-shâstra*. Vasubandhu, author of *Abhidharmakosha* and *Bhâshya* was one of his distinguished students. Vasubandhu studied with Samghabhadra the *Vibhâsas*, the Shâstras of eighteen schools, the *Sutras*, the *Vinayas*, etc. Gunaprabha and Vimalamitra are the two other teachers of Kashmir whose names occur in the records of Yuan Chwang. After the Kushan rule Buddhism met reverses in Kashmir for some time in fifth century A. D. and after, particularly during the reign of the Turushka King Mihirkul. His son, Mahasammata and Mahasammata's successor Mahaturushka erected many Buddhist temples and monasteries, helped propagation of Buddhism, and made good the loss suffered by Buddhism on account of the vandalism of their predecessor. According to Taranath, Mahasammata built some Chaityas in Ghazni and invited to Kashmir Vasubandhu's disciple Sanghadasa, who founded the Ratnagupta Vihara in Kashmir and spread Mahayanism there for the first time. Mihirkul massacred the monks and pulled down the monasteries; and another King Nara, on account of the crime of a Buddhist monk, got wild and destroyed thousands of Buddhist Viharas. King Meghavahan of Kashmir, who hailed from Gandhara, had a soft corner for Buddhism. His queen Amritaprabha built for the Buddhist monks a lofty Vihara called Amrita-bhavana to which the Chinese traveller, Ou Kong, who came to Kashmir in 759 A.D., made a reference. Meghavahan's another queen, Khadana by name, also erected a Vihara in Khadaniya about four miles below Baramulla on the right bank of the Vitasta. With Meghavahan are associated the *Avadânas* which extol his sacrifices for Buddhism. Skandagupta, a minister of King Yudhishthira II built the Skanda-bhavana Vihara in the vicinity of Srinagar. King Lalitaditya in the middle of the eighth century A.D. erected the ever-rich Rajavihara with a Chatuhsala and a large Chaitya and placed in it a large image of Buddha. In one of his Viharas lived Bhikshu Sarvajnamitra, the author of *Sragdharastotra* and a nephew of a king of Kashmir. Cankuna, the chief minister of King Lalitaditya, built two Viharars, one of which was very lofty and contained a golden image of Buddha.

After the Kushans a Turushka royal family, known as Turki Shahis[4] ruled over Kashmir, and in fact all over North India for about a hundred years from the third century A.D. The Turki Shahis professed Buddhism and were great supporters of the faith which

[4] For further details about the Shahis see *The Dynastic History of North India* by Dr. H. C. Ray (Vol. I, Chap. II.).

prospered very much during their reign. Prof. Sylvain Levi thinks that the Turk dynasty of Kashmir is identical with Albiruni's Shahiyas of Kabul and Kalhan's Sahi dynasty. In the view of Albiruni, the Sahi princes were Turks of Tibetan origin and were zealous followers of Buddhism, and that the Buddhist dynasty of Sahis continued after interruption up to the ninth century when they were replaced by a brahminic dynasty of the same title and which dynasty existed upto the eleventh century. Kalhan tells us that the Sahis had their capital at Udbhandpur established in the reign of Sankaravarman. Dr. Nalinakhsa Dutta observes :

> The Sahis had their first seat in the Dard Country (Dardistan), and then with the disappearance of their independence, they were scattered, some Sahi princes taking to service under the kings in the Kashmir Court and some preferring to lead independent lives in the mountainous regions of North Kashmir. The entry of the Sahi princes into the Kashmir Court commenced in the reign of Lalitaditya. . . . Thenceforward the Sahi princes by marriage, alliances, or otherwise became closely connected with the Kashmir royalties. Didda, the Sahi princess, managed to place on the throne of Kashmir her brother Samgramraja, who was followed by his sons and grandsons.

Though the Sahi princes lost their independence, they wielded great influence in the administration of Kashmir. Sir Aurel Stein infers from the Lahore museum manuscript of *Râjatarangini* that the 'Sahi' was the title of the Dard rulers, and thus accounts for the name Vidyadhar Sahi, the ruler of the Dards during the reign of Harsha. Some Sahi princes about the tenth or eleventh century managed to create some independent States for themselves in the mountainous regions of Gilgit, Yasin, Chitral, etc., generally known as Dardistan, a short account of which is given in the opening paras of this essay. The *Bhaishajyagurusutra*, one of the Gilgit Mss., mentions in the colophon the name of Shrideva Sahi Surendra Vikramaditya Nanda, whose queens were Samidevi, Trailokyadevi, and Vihali. One of the Gilgit Mss. is the gift of this king, while several others were given away by local devotees like Sulkhina, Sulivajra, Mamtoti, Mangalsura, and Aryadevendrabhuta. The scribe of the king's Mss. is Aryasthirabuddhi and the collaborator is Narendra Dutta.

The Chinese traveller Ou Kong *alias* Dharmadhatu lived in Kashmir for four years and studied Sanskrit and learnt *Vinaya* in seven sections from three teachers. He learnt the Shilas in Mundi Vihara and refers to Amritabhavana, Anandabhavan, and five other Viharas. He records that he noticed more than 300 monasteries in the kingdom and a large number of Stupas and images. He specifies that there were three passes through which Kashmir was to be approached in those days. And we know from Taranath that the second pass became fit for communication soon after Madhyantika's death. Dr. Nalinaksha Dutta guesses that the second pass is represented to-day by the present Gilgit Road on which stands the Stupa from which the Buddhist Mss. have been discovered. In the *Government of India Census Report* of 1931 this note is published :

> There are two Buddhist Stupas, one on the hill side about three miles east of Gilgit and the other on the road to Nagar between Chalt and Minapin. There is a small Buddha carved on the rocks at the mouth of Kirgah Nullah, three miles west of Gilgit ; and small Buddhas and Buddhist relics have been found in Yasin.

From this it is evident that Buddhism lingered in this country upto a very late date; and it is quite probable, for it was the seat of the late Sahi rulers who professed Buddhism.

Deputed by the India Government Sten Konow came to Kashmir in 1908 in search of inscriptions and other things of archæological value. He discovered during his survey at the village of Uskur the ruins of a Stupa referred to by Ou Kong as Mundi Vihara. He also found among other things an inscription written in Sanskrit in Shâradâ script and the remains of the monastery at Khadaniyar built by queen Khadana. Before Sten Konow's survey Pandit Kashiram also found out ruins of some

temples in this village. Rai Bahadur Dayarâm Sahani carried on some explorations at Parihaspur, Puranadhisthan and Hushkapur, an account of which appeared in the *Archæological Survey Reports* of 1915-16. Mr. Vogel also discovered some remains of a Buddhist Stupa near a village named Malangpur, three miles from Avantipur. While Pandit R. C. Kak was the head of the Archæological Department of the Kashmir State he collected several images of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Buddhist gods and goddesses, some large jars bearing inscriptions in Gupta characters. But his greatest discovery is the ruins at Harwan (eleven miles away from Srinagar) which is supposed to have been the seat of Nagarjuna. In his grand work *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* published by the India Society of London, he gives an interesting survey of the archæological remains of Kashmir. Pandit R. C. Kak discovered at Harwan some remarkable brick tiles with presentations of Jâtaka scenes or certain scenes from Buddha's life. The tiles are numbered in Kharostri figures, which shows that the buildings were made before fifth century A. D.

The latest epoch-making archæological discovery in Kashmir is the find of some Buddhist Mss. deposited within the vault of a Stupa near Gilgit in Dardistan. Sir Aurel Stein first made an announcement of this discovery in the *Statesman* of 24 July 1931. He reported that

> Some cow-boys watching flock above Nanpur village about two miles west of Gilgit Cantonment are said to have cleared a piece of timber sticking out on the top of a small stone-covered mound. Further digging laid bare a circular chamber within the ruins of a Buddhist Stupa filled with hundreds of small votive Stupas and relief plaques common in Central Asia and Tibet. In course of the excavations, a great mass of ancient Mss. came to light closely packed in what appears to have been a wooden box. The palaeographic indications of some of the Mss. suggest that they date back to the sixth century A.D.

M. Hackin visited the spot and supplied the following information which was published in the *Journal Asiatique* of 1982 :

> The place of discovery is situated about three miles to the north of Gilgit in the mountainous region. There are four Stupas placed side by side with square basements. The hemispherical domes of the two Stupas are well-preserved. And it is the third Stupa which has yielded the Mss. This Stupa has double basements the lower of which measures six metres, sixty cm. on each side and next receding about sixty cm. in all the four sides. The highest of this Stupa is twelve to fifteen metres. The diameter of the chamber containing the Mss. is two metres forty cm. In the centre of the chamber there were five wooden boxes, the fifth containing the other four in which were kept all the Mss.

Pandit Madhusudan Kaul, the present Superintendent, Archæological Department of the Kashmir Government carried on further excavations at the site in 1938 and found three or four more Mss. in one of the Stupas mentioned above.

The chance discovery of the Gilgit Mss. is a welcome surprise to India and to the Buddhist world. The Wazir of Gilgit got the Mss. in bundles of jumbled up leaves with several lost or damaged and sent them to Srinagar. The present Maharaja of Kashmir realized the value of this cultural treasure and decided to get them published by his Government and handed over the same to the then Prime Minister. But as ill luck would have it, the Mss. remained locked up in the Government Records Department for six or seven years. When Sir Gopalaswamy Iyengar became the Premier of the State and Pandit R. C. Kak the Chief Secretary, the work of editing and publishing them was started in right earnest. Dr. Narendranath Law of Calcutta suggested to the Maharaja of Kashmir to get the Mss. edited by competent Indian scholars and publish them in India. The Maharaja readily agreed and Dr. Nalinaksha Dutta was entrusted with the responsible work of editing them. Dr. Dutta with the assistance of a host of other eminent scholars has already edited a large portion of them, and three volumes have already been published by the Archæological and Research Department of Kashmir at Srinagar. Vidyavaridhi

Pandit Shivanath Shastri of this Department has very ably transcribed with great labour the whole Mss. into Devanagar script from Gupta script in which the Mss. are written. The missing lines of the Mss. have been restored by the learned editor from their Chinese and Tibetan translations. Portions of the Mss. reconstructed by Dr. Dutta appeared in the *Indian Historical Quarterly* for 1932, 1933, and 1938, etc. The Mss. are written in Sanskrit language, but in cursive Gupta characters of the sixth century on birch bark. Considering the period it was under earth it is surprising that the glaze of the ink still remains and can be easily revived by a slight wiping with a piece of damp soft cloth. The Mss. are of the same type as are most of the Mss. discovered by Sir Aurel Stein and other explorers in Eastern Turkistan and Central Asia. The Mss. leaves are very large in size being about 23½" long and 5" broad. There are about 423 leaves in the Mss., each page having ten lines. Each leaf covers about 4 pages in print, and as some pages are lost the available leaves will cover about 1,100 pages in print, i.e., 4 volumes of 275 pages of which 3 volumes are already out. A few leaves of the Mss. passed into the hands of Sir Aurel Stein who handed them over to the British Museum, the authorities of which gave them on to Prof. Sylvain Levi who published them in the *Journal Asiatique* of 1932. A fragmentary leaf of these Mss. is preserved at the Bombay St. Xavier's College by Prof. Heras and was seen by Dr. Nalinakhsa Dutta.

(*To be concluded*)

MIRA BAI

BY PROF. SUDHANSUBIMAL MOOKERJI, M.A.

Of the saints of Medieval India the career of Mirabai is one of the most romantic. One thing common about these saints is that they all realized the Universal Soul through love and devotion, and the joy consequent on this realization found expression in soul-stirring songs and verses. Hence almost all of them were consummate poets—votaries of 'Satyam, Shivam, and Sundaram'. The God they speak of is absolutely non-communal and non-sectarian. They discarded the beaten track of conventionalism and the manifestation of God in their life and activities was natural and spontaneous.

Born between 1499 and 1504 A.D., Mirabai was the daughter of Ratan Singh of Kudrki in Jodhpur. Being the only daughter of her parents, Mira was an object of great affection to them. Her uncommon character revealed itself from her childhood. Juvenile sports and pastimes had no charm for her. Girdharlalji—a stone image—was her most beloved companion. It is said that a mendicant once became the guest of Ratan Singh. He had this image with him and Mira wanted to have it. Her prayer was turned down; and consolations and inducements notwithstanding, Mira abstained from food and drink for two or three days. Her parents offered immense wealth to the mendicant; but he was inexorable. He left the place. At the dead of night on the same day he had a vision. He came back next morning and handed over the image to Mira.

Mira was given in marriage in 1517 to Prince Bhoja, son of Rana Sanga of Mewar. Girdharlalji she took with her to Chitore. Mira became a widow in 1527. She now became an austere ascetic. The world had no attraction for her. She dedicated herself to the service of Girdharlalji and to the entertainment of mendicants and Sannyâsins

and trampled under feet the conventionalities of the royal harem.

Mira's ways of life were not to the liking of her relatives in general and of her brother-in-law Maharana Vikramjit in particular. These, he thought, were ill-befitting a lady of the royal harem; and he asked her to mend her ways. But a true devotee, who has once tasted the ecstasy of communion with the Supreme Soul, has the mind freed from the trammels of conventionalism and is indifferent to social formalities. The Rana had recourse to a stratagem. Two artful maid-servants Champa and Chameli—were charged with mending Mira's ways. Thus when she would sit absorbed in listening to the Shâstric discussions of Sâdhus, these two would spare no pains to divert her attention and take her away by emphasizing that such conduct would lead to her being spoken ill of by others. They would din into her ears that worship and devotion were futile and preach incessantly that material enjoyments were the be-all and end-all of existence.

Obstacles only stiffened Mira's attitude. Champa and Chameli were gradually won over to Mira's way of thinking and became her disciples before long. Other women, who made similar attempts afterwards, fared no better. At last Udabai, younger sister of Vikramjit, appeared on the scene and exercised her influence to wean Mira from the path of devotion. She told her, 'Mira, your husband was a scion of the Solar Dynasty famed all over India. How is it that you dance with unknown Sâdhus to the tune of claps? Please listen to me. Come back to the harem. Do not bring infamy on the immaculate reputation of your husband's family. Incense the Rana no more.' These words had but little impression on Mira. Composed as composure itself, she replied,

Ab nahin mânun Rânâ khârin, main barpayo Girdhâri
Mani Kapurki ek gati hai, koi kaho hajâri.

I owe no allegiance to your Rana. Girdhari Himself is my Lord. Let people say what they like. Gems and camphor are alike to me.

She next proceeds to give a pen-picture of the Lord of her soul—

Ratan jaditaki topee sirapai, hâr kantako bhâri
Charan ghunghru ghamas padatahai, main karon shyamshunari
Lâja saram sabhi main dâri yantana charana âdhâri
Mirâke prabhu Girdhar nâgara, jhakmâro sansâri.

I am in love with Shyam with a jewelled crown on His head, a fine necklace on the neck and tingling anklets on His legs. Shame and respect have I none. This body of mine is but a footstool of His. Girdhar Nagar is Mira's Lord. Let people do what they can.

Udabai told Mira that the Rana would poison her to death. Mira's reply was—

Bai Uda gholyo to gholan do
Kar charanâmrita bahi mai pibashyan—

Does the Rana prepare poison for me? Let him. I shall drink it in the belief that it is 'charanâmrita,' i.e., the water with which the feet of the deity have been washed.

Udabai replied that the poison was so deadly that its very sight was sure to cause death. Mira said,

Bai Uda nahin kshânre mâya na bâp
Amar dâli dharati palyâ.

My parents did not stuff me with nectar. Death is, therefore, inevitable. It shall come when it will.

Uda gave up all hopes. The Rana acting on the advice of his ministers sent poison to Mira telling her that it was Charanâmrita. Mira saw through the game. Yet she drank it. But the poison did her no harm. The upshot was that her devotion for the Lord increased manifold.

Mira was one day singing the glory of the Lord. Her eyes were shining with a divine lustre, and her form was divinely luminous. Uda happened to see her in this ecstatic condition. A change came over her and she became a disciple of Mira.

One night the door-keepers informed Vikramjit that a man had got into Mira's apartments. The Rana rushed in with a drawn sabre in his hand. He asked her who the man was who had got into her room and where he was.

Mira replied, 'Why do you ask me? Don't you see my beloved friend Girdharlal before you?' He, however, saw none but the attendants of Mira. Crest fallen, he made ready to leave the room, when to his great horror he saw Nrisimha, the fourth of the ten incarnations of Vishnu, on Mira's cot. The vision made him senseless. He came back to his senses after a short while and left the room without a word. Once Vikramjit sent some poisonous snakes to Mira. When these reached her, she saw them already transformed into wreaths of flowers.

These miracles soon travelled beyond the borders of Mewar. Tradition has it that Emperor Akbar accompanied by the great musician Tansen came to pay a visit to Mira. As soon as the Emperor had reached the gates of the city, Mira told her attendants, 'Emperor Akbar himself is waiting at the gate. Go and accord a befitting reception to him.'

Mira's name became gradually a household word in many parts of the country. But there was no love lost between the Rana and Mira. It was about this time that she wrote to the great saint Tulsidas seeking his advice as to what she should do. Tulsidas advised her to shun the company of those who were not devotees of Râma and Sitâ. Mira made up her mind. Clad in ochre-coloured cloth and accompanied by Champa and Chameli, she bade adieu to Chitore. She first went to her father's place where she stayed for some time and then went to Brindavan. Visits to saints and devotees brought peace to her. On one occasion she went to the hermitage of Rupa Goswami. The latter refused to see her and sent word that he had nothing to do with women. Mira retorted : 'I was so long under the impression that there is but one male—Girdharlalji—in Brindavan. It is now revealed to me that He has a rival.' The Goswami was put to shame and extended a hearty welcome to Mira. From Brindavan she went to Mathura.

Mira's departure from Chitore was followed by a crisis in the history of Mewar. Bahadur Shah of Gujrat swooped down upon Chitore and plundered it. Vikramjit made good his escape to Bundi and saved his life at the cost of his throne. Public opinion connected all these with the ill treatment to Mirabai and her departure from Chitore. So she must be brought back. Several brahmins were despatched for the purpose. Their tearful persuasion notwithstanding, Mira turned a deaf ear to their entreaties.

Later in life Mira met the great saint Ruidasji and had her initiation from him.

A polyglot and erudite Sanskrit scholar, Mira was gifted with poetic ability of a very high order. Saints from all over India came to her. She had a fair knowledge of Brajabuli. She wrote several books—*Narshijiki Mayra* (Life of Saint Narshi), *Râga Govinda*, and also a commentary on *Gita Govinda*.

Mira breathed her last between 1564 and 1574 A.D.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

We begin a new year amidst world chaos and Indian distress. Our fervent prayer naturally goes to God to end this misery soon, for human nature can bear no more. . . . The picture on the cover presents Shri Ramakrishna's paternal house at Kamarpukur, and the frontispiece depicts Natarâja dancing the dissolution of the universe. . . . The magazine opens with a translation of a chapter from Sreemat Swami Saradanandaji's *Lilâprasanga*, an authoritative and well-known Bengali work on the life and message of Shri Ramakrishna. . . . Mr. M. S. Aney,

India's Representative in Ceylon, presents Swami Vivekananda's message in his short but illuminating address. . . . Dr. R. C. Majumdar, former Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University, underlines some phases of *Indian culture*. . . . Mr. Manu Subedar of the Central Legislature finds real *joy* in *service*. . . . Prof. M. H. Syed of the Allahabad University, though an erudite Muhammedan scholar, has discerning eyes for Hindu ideals. . . . Mr. W. H. Koch of Switzerland finds consolation in preparing the ideological field for human harmony, which the world is sorely in need of. . . . Swami Apurvananda, who is already known for his visit to Kailas, takes us this time on a pilgrimage to Gomukhi. . . . Prof. D. N. Sharma points out the *Limitations of Behaviourism*. . . . Mr. S. K. Shastri of Lahore makes *Socrates* throw some valuable light on the theory of Karma. . . . Bhikshu Brahmabodhi gives a short account of the history and contents of the now famous *Gilgit manuscripts*.

National Education

Educationists in every country have applied themselves to the serious task of evolving the best possible system of education for the young in conformity with the history and genius of each nation. In India, too, nationalist Indians have attempted to reorganize the present educational system of the country in a way suited to the national genius and character. But unfortunately their efforts have not met with success, and the education obtaining in our country at present can hardly be called national. Writing in the *Triveni Quarterly* for September 1943, Dr. P. Natarajan observes :

> Every living nation has a national system of education based on a philosophy which it has accepted. There is, perhaps, no domain of national activity so dependent on a clear-cut philosophy as the education of the young. Is the mind of the child a clean slate on which impressions have to be made in future, or is it already full of impressions which determine its future activity and education? Is religion to be taught in schools? Are children to be assumed to be scientific materialists for the future of India? These are some of the questions that have to be answered before anything like planned national effort in educational reconstruction could be thought of. . . . It is deplorable, however, that no serious or patient and painstaking effort is in evidence which would help us to have a theory of education suited to our national genius.

Ancient Indian thinkers formulated clear and practical ideas in answer to the above questions long ago. In India of the past education meant training of the inner man, refinement of his feelings and emotions and a proper regulation of the springs of action. Swami Vivekananda defines education as the manifestation of the perfection already in man, and declares :

> We must have life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas. We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on his own feet. The ideal of all education, all training should be man-making.

Vedanta teaches that all knowledge is within man, even within the child, and that the work of the teacher consists in merely helping from outside, in creating the necessary and suitable circumstances to awaken the potential power within. The tragedy of our present education is that it has proved unreal, negative, and unproductive of the right type of men and women. The reasons for this are obvious. Education in India is nothing but a replica of the Western model : and the Indian youth, instead of getting the stamp of the national genius and culture, is steeped in Western ideology and Western socio-economic theories. Dr. Natarajan deplores this tendency among the Indian youths to look beyond the shores of the soil for a new philosophy to guide life and activity, and remarks :

> It is not, therefore, to Russia, America, or England that we have to turn to see common aspects between the soul of India and what is most genuine and true in the thought of modern humanity. . . . Aimlessness in education is a defect which is found even in

countries which enjoy full political freedom. This is due to lack of a philosophical background.

Drawing our attention to the rich cultural heritage of India which is not wanting in sound educational ideas, amply suited to Indian ideals, he adds,

> Precious indications of the right philosophy of Indian education are to be found scattered in the ancient writings. Valuable indications about the objects and aims of education are found in the Mimamsa Shastras, and in the Bhagavadgita. The opening passages of the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, the Dharma Shastras, and the Puranas and books like the *Gnanavasishta* contain, when studied and elaborated, a theory of education that will be found to be sound in the best modern sense.

While referring in passing to the Gurukula system, the learned Doctor, however, says,

> Vague spiritual values, which might easily degenerate into a sort of sentimentalism, must be carefully avoided in the study of educational problems of our country. Too easy generalizations, convictions based on metaphors and analogies, acceptance of particular schools of orthodox thought which conduce to so much vagueness in educational literature, taking the end, however noble, to justify the means, all these have to be vigilantly fought against.

Vagueness and easy generalizations, sectarian bias and harping on catchwords—these are to be avoided by all means by sincere workers in any field of national activity. But the fact has to be borne in mind that religion, in its purest form, is the central motive of every aspect of Indian life, to whatever community or denomination one may belong. Education dissociated from religion will lose its national character, for in India nationalism cannot but be predominantly religious, both in individual and collective life. The extremely individualistic educational system of the West which engenders fight and competition in every walk of life has proved most unsuitable in India. Recently the newspapers reported in brief a scheme for a system of national education for children in India prepared by the Educational Adviser to the Government. But it has been the unfortunate experience of Indians to find that any system of education, with a predominantly foreign outlook, and not based on purely national ideals, has not always proved satisfactory, though it might have been very ambitious in its scheme. A realistic education on national lines, which combines the best of Western scientific thought, imparted through national methods, will serve the best interests of the country.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Swami Vivekananda was essentially a man of youths, 'old in age, young in heart,' his magnificent personality that captivated the youthful imagination of modern India was the embodiment of fearlessness and strength. Dr. H. C. Mookherjee, writing in *The Social Welfare* (Annual Number) on this 'Old Youth of Bengal', makes the following observations :

> The saffron-clad Vivekananda for the first time stood before the Congress of Religions at Chicago and, unlike the Indians who had preceded him and who had invariably assumed an apologetic attitude of humility, addressed his audience not as ladies and gentlemen, but as men and women of America, thus placing every one on a basis of equality. He showed for the first time the supreme self-confidence of the eternal spirit of youth—the self-confidence which knows no bar of country, race or colour. He had a message for the West, something new to teach and, from a position of humility he raised his country to one of equality with the West. The ideal he placed before the West was a spiritual and a devotional one—an ideal which had not been preached before his time with his fiery eloquence. Nor can the Indian, specially when he is interested in the birth and development of Indian Nationalism, afford to overlook the great influence Vivekananda exercised in giving a particular shape to it—a matter very clearly recognised and explained by the late C. F. Andrews and his colleagues in their history of the Indian National Congress.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

TWENTY PORTRAITS. By Mukul Dey, A.R.C.A. (London). *Published by Thacker Spink & Co. (1933), Ltd., Calcutta.*

Mukul Dey is a versatile artist of the modern school of painting in Bengal. He made his mark as a pupil of Dr. Abanindra Nath Tagore before he was taken by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore to accompany him in his tour through the Far East and America (1916-17). There he studied sedulously the technique of the Japanese painters as well as of the famous etchers of U.S.A. In 1917 he published his *Twelve Portraits* which at once made him famous. Then he sailed away to Europe and worked hard to equip himself as a first class artist, returning home, to join the Government School of Art, Calcutta, as its Principal. For nearly a quarter of a century, he has been drawing portraits of men and women, some of whom were reproduced in his *Fifteen Drypoints* (Calcutta 1939). Now he adds twenty more to his remarkable portrait-gallery and we congratulate the artist on his signal success. The portrait of Dr. Annie Besant is dated 1917 ; of Sarojini Naidu, 1918 ; and of Sri Aurobindo, 1919. Even in that probationary period, he could bring out the inner character and subtlety of the subjects, especially in the case of the Sage of Pondichery. He was an ardent admirer of W. W. Pearson, whom he depicted with rare fidelity and devotion just a month before his tragic death in a railway accident in Italy (Sept. 1923). In 1926 we find him studying the faces of Albert Einstein and Sven Hedin in Berlin. In 1928 he drew the portraits of C. F. Andrews and of the Sage of Sabarmati, Mahatma Gandhi, the last being one of the best that has come from Mukul Dey. In 1932 he had the rare privilege of portraying the national poet of India, Rabindranath, a very significant study. In 1937 he drew the figure of Sarat Chandra Chatterji, the renowned novelist of Bengal and of Dr. Abanindranath Tagore, the Guru of Mr. Dey. He has given in this volume not only some of his best portraits, but has drawn our attention to the great possibility of chronicling through art the national and international currents in Indian history. We congratulate the author and recommend the book to all lovers of the East and the West.

Kalidas Nag

IMMORTAL INDIA. By L. H. Ajwani. *Published by the Educational Publishing Co., Karachi. Pp. 196. Price Rs. 2-8.*

The presence of a large number of foreigners in India and the keen interest evinced by many of them in Indian life and culture have necessitated the publication of popular and informative books on India. The book under review, which is running its second edition only six months after its first publication, gives within a couple of hundred pages a lot of valuable information on the various aspects of the social, religious, and cultural life of India. It is far from being a mere 'guide book', for the topics are dealt with under twelve distinct headings in a way easily intelligible to the ordinary reader. The two chapters on *The Indian Way of Life* are well written and will serve to present a true picture of Indian life and customs. Separate chapters are devoted to the discussion of the different systems and schools of Indian philosophy, and of the saints, religious leaders, and prominent persons from Buddha down to Mahatma Gandhi, not excluding the Muslim sages and mystics, Sufis and Zoroastrians. The author has done well in adding the section on Indian women in the present edition as this will help the foreign reader in forming a correct idea of the equitable position of woman in Hindu society. The book is replete with apt quotations from various sources, especially from the published works of Swami Vivekananda and *The Cultural Heritage of India*. We gladly commend the book to those who are desirous of knowing the 'truth' about India and her people. It is attractively got up and contains some illustrations.

GANDHI AGAINST FASCISM. Edited by Jag Parvesh Chander, B.A., LL.B. *Published by Free India Publications, Commercial Buildings, The Mall, Lahore. Pp. 102+xi. Price Rs. 2.*

Gandhiji's present imprisonment has unfortunately deprived us of his words. For the moment we can do no better than go through his previous writings and understand his mind. But his writings being extensive, his statements on certain topics lie so scattered in them that it is not easily possible for the general reader to trace them exhaustively. In order to remove that difficulty and bring within easy reach of the

reading public, his great thoughts on different subjects, Free India Publications of Lahore have published very timely some handy and decent books, of which the volume under review is an important one.

The present book, which opens with a learned introduction by the editor, is an exhaustive collection of Gandhiji's statements and interviews that disclose his strong opposition to Fascism. The three appendices of the book contain sayings of other Congress leaders that bespeak their anti-Fascist views. A perusal of Gandhiji's writings, as contained in this volume and compiled mainly from the *Harijan*, will convince anybody of the fact that Gandhiji as well as the Congress is dead against Fascism. Even the allies had to admit this brute fact as evidenced in the statements of Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Strabolgi, General Smuts, and Louis Fisher, all quoted in the present book.

Gandhiji, who in the words of the thoughtful editor of this book, 'has truth in his heart, wears the sandals of non-violence, carries the stick of love, whose loin-cloth is made of charity, and who through spectacles of peace sees the greatest good for all, whose mind radiating equality of 'all religions,' whose thoughts purifying those who think of him, whose steps of goodwill, slow and steady but firm', can never be even in dream a Fascist, whose fundamental creed is violence. Gandhiji who has implicit faith in the omnipotence of Ahimsâ cannot harbour in his heart the least liking for Fascism. Gandhism and Fascism are diametrically opposed.

S. J.

SADHANA-SANJEEVI. BY MALLIMADUGULA SATYANARAYAN. *Published by The Nagpur Press, Limited, 10, Ordinance Lines, Nagpur (C.P). Pp. 55. Price not mentioned.*

This booklet is translated into English by one of the early friends of the author at his request. In the *Foreword*, the author, who appears to be a sincere Vedantist Sâdhaka, explains the significance of the name given to the book. It is said in the *Râmâyana* that when Lakshmana swooned down in the battle, he was administered by Hanuman a divine drug called Sanjeevi by whose miraculous effect Lakshmana recovered his consciousness. The book is so named as it describes the Sâdhanâ that like Sanjeevi will serve aspirants to realize their true nature as Brahman now enveloped by ignorance (Avidyâ).

The booklet contains one hundred relevant questions with their appropriate answers on Vedantic Sâdhanâ or methods of self-realization. The author, quite in obedience to the Advaita Vedantic injunctions, prescribes for the attainment of Brahma-Jnâna a twofold Sâdhanâ: the meditation on the individual Self (Âtmâ) as Brahman and the repetition of 'OM', the sound symbol of Brahman, with concentrated devotion. The *Shvetâshvatara Upanishad* designates Omkara as the raft which can carry one across the ocean of Samsâra to the realization of Brahma. The author rightly believes that when the grace of the Guru and the sincere effort of the disciple synchronize, then realization, so difficult of attainment, is sure to dawn upon the latter. His exposition is simple and straight, clear and convincing. He simplifies Sâdhanâ and frees it from all crudities. The answers to the questions contain many valuable hints on Sâdhanâ and some secrets of spiritual practice.

S. J.

BENGALI

PATRASANKALAN. BY SWAMI ABHEDANANDA. *Published by Swami Prajnanananda from Sri Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 19B, Raja Rajkrishna Street, Calcutta. Pp. 132. Price Re. 1.*

This little book under review presents a precious collection of some of the epistles of Swami Abhedananda and some written to him by his brother disciples while the former was preaching Vedanta in the West. The letters written to Swami Abhedananda are testimony to the great love and admiration the direct disciples of the Master bore each other. Some of these letters written by Swamis Premananda, Ramakrishnananda, and Abhedananda are highly interesting, instructive, and inspiring. All interested in the Ramakrishna movement will no doubt remain thankful to the publishers for this small, but none the less important, book. The get-up is nice.

MIRA BAI. BY SWAMI VAMADEVANANDA. *Published by the Udbodhan Office, 1, Udbodhan Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta. Pp. 64. Price 8 annas.*

This little book is written in a simple fascinating style for young people. But older people, too, can derive much benefit from it. It is regrettable that Indian history has not preserved the anecdotes of the lives of such eminent saints as Mira Bai. But the writer has collected all available details. A few songs of Mira, with translation in Bengali poetry, at the end, have added much to the value of the book.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY

The Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda falls on the 17th January, 1944.

DISTRESS IN BENGAL

Signs of the terrible famine now raging over Bengal first began to appear in the early months of the present year. Reports of the deteriorating condition of the people came pouring to us from different quarters. Rice was fast disappearing from the market owing to a variety of causes, and the prices of all manner of commodities, especially foodgrains, were shooting up sharply. Many faced acute hardship and more starvation. Our Mission began to take thought of the situation early in the year, and, so far as we know, was the first among the organized public bodies to start work for the relief of the distressed. At the time, however, there was little idea about the dire and appalling character, the vast and terrifying proportions the problem was to assume in after months.

It is impossible to convey, much more to exaggerate, in language what has actually befallen the masses of Bengal in the four months (August to November) of the second half of 1943. Things have to be seen to be believed. Rice has virtually disappeared from the open market. It can be found in small quantities in black markets only at exorbitant prices. In a few instances rice was sold at Rs. 105 per md., which is 425% higher than the controlled rate and about 2,000% higher than the pre-war rate. Not only rice but other foodgrains and potatoes also have become scarce and are beyond the purchasing power of the general mass of buyers. The poor and the middle classes, most of whom live on the verge of starvation in normal times, and who buy their rice in the market, have been confronted with a desperate situation. The classes worst affected by the crisis are landless agricultural labourers, wage-earners of various kinds, weavers, fishermen, potters, smiths, small traders, shop assistants and the middle classes with various kinds of independent professions or living on salaries and wages. It is no exaggeration to say that in many villages of Bengal almost entire classes of men of some of the above categories have been clean swept away by the famine. Many in the mofussil including middle-class families, have sold their utensils, implements, tools, cattle, houses and land, in short, whatever they had—and have moved to urban areas, sleeping under the trees by the roadside, in search of a morsel of food. Many of these did not even have the strength, after days of starvation, to reach the outskirts of the towns and dropped dead on the way. The hungry men, women and children flocking to towns and roaming in the villages present a heart-rending spectacle. Half-naked men in dirty rags and reduced to skeletons, famished and rickety children with distended stomachs and withered legs, skinny babies with protruding ribs and skull-like heads sucking the

dry breasts of the emaciated and anaemic mothers—the sight of this gaunt humanity has become familiar all over Bengal. Thousands of these are living in the open on the pavements by the roadside, without cover and without shelter, and are daily dying in hundreds. These wandering homeless men crowd at stations





at train-time, at street-corners and bus and tram-stands in the cities for a paltry sum or a grain of food. They may be seen diligently rummaging heaps of garbage in the dust-bins on the streets and roads in towns, in the hope of finding food-particles at which even dogs would not care to look. Thousands have been uprooted from their homes and villages, family ties have been sundered, men have deserted their wives and dependants and parents have sold their children for a few pieces of bread.

Whole villages have become almost depopulated, and sometimes there are hardly men enough to cremate the dead. Jackals and vultures feed upon the corpses of many of these victims in broad daylight. In some cases dogs and jackals begin to devour the unfortunate



DAILY FEEDING OF DESTITUTES AT BELUR MATH

dying creatures, lying helpless in the open, even before life is extinct in them. Decomposing corpses lie scattered upon many village roads and are making the water foul and the air stinking in many localities. Babies have died in their mothers' laps; mothers have died with babies in their arms. The dead bodies have sometimes been left upon the roads, or thrown into rivers or ponds. It is not possible to have any accurate figure of persons already dead or dying daily in Bengal. But Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, who toured the various districts of Bengal nearly a month ago, computed that the average death-rate per week all over Bengal would be not less than 50,000.



DESTITUTES AT DACCA

For months people in various localities have been trying to live upon food substitutes of various kinds, some of them hardly edible. In some cases they were even positively injurious to health. We have had reports of cases in which men have lived purely on Dal for months together. These were the more fortunate ones. Others have taken to eating roots of various kinds, gram, leaves of different kinds of plants. Some even attempted to take grass in their utter desperation. Cholera, malaria, influenza, and other



DEATH DUE TO STARVATION AT DACCA

diseases have broken out in great virulence, and in many cases in an epidemic form, in the wake of starvation. They are also taking a heavy toll of human lives everywhere. In some areas malaria has assumed a more threatening aspect than even the famine. In the last analysis, however, all these diseases are but a sequel to and part of the famine itself.



RECEIVING DOLES AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, SARISHA, DIAMOND HARBOUR

The fast approaching winter has added to the already unbearable burden of woes. The people are in rags, and in many places the women are without proper clothes to cover their shame. Starving and naked as they are, the winter is still further tightening the cold grip of death upon them.

There are other sad and inhuman aspects of the situation, to which very little attention is just now being given—men patiently resigning themselves to death, the depths of degradation and depravity to which men have sunk, the brutality and the callousness, the abandonment of all tender feelings and restraint, which along with others have created a real revolution in the social sphere of the country. These are but the high lights of a scene which beggars all description.

The new Aman crop, which promises to be a bumper one, will be shortly harvested. The peasants are gazing wistfully at the rippening corn. It is sometime, however, before the rice will come into the market. There is also the problem of



DISTRIBUTION OF RICE AT A MISSION CENTRE, NARAYANGANJ



getting enough labourers for harvesting the crop. Moreover, people are fearful as to what may happen to this bumper crop even.

But meanwhile the need for relief --for funds, food, clothes, blankets and medicines remains great and urgent. A number of relief organizations are in the field. They are daily saving thousands of lives.

In June last, when the distress was far from assuming its present fearful proportions, we organized some units to supply rice free or at a cheaper rate, or give monetary help to deserving families through some of our branch centres in mofussil towns and villages. The number of these centres has steadily increased as we have been progressively extending the area of our work, and the amount of help we are giving to the distressed. At present we are operating through 70 centres which are scattered over 19 districts and cover about 800 villages and 22 towns including Calcutta, and their suburbs. Rice and foodgrains are being distributed mostly free and some at cheap rates. Monetary help is also being given in accordance with the needs of certain places. We are distributing cloth also. During the second half of November about 7,300 mds. of foodgrains mostly rice, 1 md. and 122 tins of barley, and Rs. 7,713/- cash were distributed among 99,000 recipients. Besides this, 7 free kitchens and several milk canteens were run the daily average attendance being about 3,500 and 1,100 respectively. Medical work was also conducted and the total number of patients treated during the fortnight was about 12,000 most of them being malaria cases.



A MILK CANTEEN

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX | *FEBRUARY, 1944* | No. 2



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

HINTS ON SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

By Swami Turiyananda

Birth in a Brahmin family is all right if one is devoted to the knowledge of Brahman; otherwise a Brahmin is worse than a pariah without love of God. 'Even women and Vaishyas and the Shudras too reach the Supreme Goal,' if they have faith in God. This agrees with the Shâstras, and we have learnt this attitude also from the Master through precept and example. I am not prepared to agree that because you have not been born a Brahmin, Brahman is a sealed book to you. Rather I think that those who affirm that non-Brahmins cannot realize God are themselves ignorant of the import of the Shastras. I am exceedingly glad to learn that you enjoy nothing except holy company. It is good even if it is a matter of pride, for it has been declared to be the 'boat for crossing the ocean of birth'. I have read in the Shastras that the fruit of holy company outweighs all kinds of austerities.

Why should the power of the brain for receiving other things diminish? Rather the power of discrimination between the good and the bad has increased, so that you do not any more feel prompted to accept what is bad. Your modesty no doubt merits praise, but I do not think you are right when you say that you are the same as you were twenty years ago. But if you meant the Self, you were right, for the Self is the same. It does not look nice in a monk to enjoy the things of the world even though the things—divine and worldly—be fit objects for his enjoyment. The Sâttvika attitude fits the monk well. That impatience of yours will not endure for ever. It will go when you will turn a little more inward. It is good to be slow and gradual with spiritual practice. It will be the same with you. The Master used to say, 'Calling on God while in the world is like fighting from a fort. It has many advantages. Others fight in the open field, which is not for all.' The thing is that the mind has to be fixed on God, whatever be the means. If that comes about, life will be a

success and will not be in vain. The demands of the body are there and will last till death. But Ramprasad sings: 'When you eat think that you are sacrificing to Mother Shyâmâ.' This counsel has to be followed. You will then easily have devotion to the Lord. The song is as follows:

> Listen, O my mind, worship Kâli in whatever way it pleases you and with whatever rites by repeating day and night the great Mantra given by the Guru.
>
> When you lie down think you are prostrating yourself, meditate on Mother in sleep. When you take food think that you are sacrificing to Mother Shyama.
>
> Whatever your ear catches are verily the sacred words of Mother.
>
> Kali is the fifty letters of the alphabet, and she dwells in every letter. Ramprasad proclaims in joy that Mother dwells everywhere. When you go about a town think that you are moving round Mother Kali.

What greater knowledge of Brahman can there be than this? This is seeing Brahman everywhere, in all action, in every being, and in every situation. You will find the same words not only in Yâjnavalkya's code, but also in many other religious codes—Yoga scriptures, Puranas, and Tantras. The *Mahânirvâna Tantra*, on the basis of which Raja Ram Mohun Roy created the original Brahma Samaj, is the authoritative work meant for the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman by the householder. God also is the Guru: He points out the necessary paths. Confess your feelings to Him: He will do whatever is necessary.

You have rightly remarked that nobody can ever achieve anything without practice. But if one performs spiritual practices sincerely, His mercy shows itself. God alone is the Guru. He is the Inner Ruler, if one prays to Him sincerely He fulfils all the desires in time. The more the yearning the nearer will be His mercy. May you have great yearning, is my sincere prayer to Him!

STOP CONVERSION

By the Editor

I

The present global conflagration has at bottom an unholy thirst for winning the world over to one's own point of view. 'Fascism is good for me and my country, *ergo* the world must accept it', says the Fascist. So also runs the Nazi argument. Communism, socialism, and all such isms in their international manifestation, have nothing but this argument to support their world recognition. Imperialism, too, is only one particular expression of this craving for world domination. Nobody cares for the intrinsic worth of the opposite view, the real welfare, the personal dignity, and integrity of those against whom such organized propaganda is aimed. Everyone is bent on proving the rightness of his particular standpoint by a mere force of number—by enlisting more adherents to the particular ism. This is as much true of individuals, as of nations. This ideological imperialism is the bane of modern international politics. There is an absolute lack of *noblesse oblige*, of helping weaker people to grow in their own way. Love of neighbours and brotherly feeling are mere empty catch-words for hoodwinking the unwary. It is the self-conceit of the more powerful minds that rules the world under the name of leadership, and it is rank imperialism that masquerades under such high-sounding words and phrases as trusteeship, mandate, development of backward areas, etc.

This is in the political and economic fields. In the social field we have the

aristocrats, the privileged few, the brahmins, who, in the name of higher values, trample upon the poor, the demos, the pariahs, who, according to the former, cannot aspire to the fine things of life until and unless they raise themselves to the cultural level of the highly placed ones or, in other words, until they ape the snobbery of the former. The *modus operandi* here, as in politics, is conversion; and here again is that same care taken for covering social imperialism under such respectable terms as culture, refinement, civilization, etc.

It will be seen thus that, though conversion is considered to be primarily a religious phenomenon, it has its tentacles spread over the whole range of human activity. In fact, it seems to be co-extensive with human nature itself so far as the latter has evolved up till now. The next step forward lies in curing men of this fatal tendency to domineer over others. World regeneration and world peace cannot be achieved until this fact is recognized and conversion as a method of procedure, in whatever field it may be, is ruled out of court.

We are not, however, concerned here with conversion in all its diverse manifestation. We shall confine our remarks primarily to the religious field. For truly do men believe that human nature can best be improved through religion, which touches the innermost core of one's being. Spiritual growth comes from within and does not follow the dictates of others.

II

To us Hindus, conversion is a new phenomenon which arrested our attention with the advent of the Muhammedans in India. It is so very foreign to the Hindu nature that even in spite of the grievous harm done to the Hindu society during the past centuries, the Hindus have not been able either to accept it as a part of their religion or counteract it effectively by some suitable device.

The Muhammedans cut off great slices from the Hindu society. And before the Hindus had time to recover from that stunning blow they were again subjected to Christian inroads. Circumstanced as the Hindus are there are two alternatives before them to save themselves and the values they stand for. They may either persuade the other communities to desist from their present activities in the name of brotherly understanding and higher spiritual values, or they may themselves take to proselytizing in an aggressive way just as the other communities are doing. From the point of view of practicability the second alternative will appeal the most; for under present conditions it would seem absurd that either Christianity or Muhammedanism can be persuaded to give up conversion, which, according to some of their followers, is a part and parcel of their religion, and which has a record of unimpeded success so far. Besides, if the Hindus take to conversion there is a chance that the other communities may become more accommodating. If the other communities feel that the Hindu proselytizers hold out a real threat which no amount of abuse, seduction, and breaking of heads can undermine, they may come to terms. Moreover, if the Hindu community can develop a fighting spirit, the weaklings in the Hindu fold may feel reassured and may not easily fall into the snares of others. There is also a possibility of winning back those from the other communities who might have gone to them not out of conviction but by force of circumstances and now feel a kind of nostalgia for the former faith.

Superficially considered, the Hindus stand to gain *almost* in every way by taking to conversion. But we use the word *almost* advisedly. For though they may gain substantially, in one respect they may be losers—and that one is by no means a negligible thing; nay, if that one goes, religion itself may be liquidated—we mean the unsullied spirituality of the Hindus. If the

Hindus have so far lost much ground —socially and politically speaking—by refraining from conversion, inasmuch as that has depleted their number and prevented them from being an aggressive community, they have at least kept their spiritual values pure. We agree, of course, that according to Hindu sociology, the higher spiritual values cannot be long kept intact unless society maintains a vigorous and progressive outlook on all worldly affairs. A moribund society cannot continue producing spiritual giants for long. With the disintegration of society spirituality is bound to suffer. Here, then, conversion advances its claim to be recognized as a saviour of Hinduism from its present impasse. In society number does count. Why not then have more? Yes, why not? We do not propose to argue against such a position, for it will lead us nowhere. Let those who want, fight it out amongst themselves. As for ourselves we should like to put the controversy on a higher plane, and look at it not only from the point of view of the Hindu's but of others as well. We propose to take our stand on spirituality, the inner and common core of all religions, and not on any particular creed or ism. And we hope, we shall be able to show that by this new orientation all creeds stand to gain.

Before proceeding to our main task, however, let us linger yet a while on Hinduism; for it is here that toleration has taken the best practical shape so far. And Shri Ramakrishna, its latest and best exponent, has shown by his life how all religions can be reconciled and how even without conversion each man can imbibe the best in other creeds. His words still ring as fresh as ever: 'As many creeds, so many paths.' What a world of meaning and what a plethora of possibilities are hidden in those pregnant words! What a wide range of application they admit of! Far from converting others, he shuddered even at the thought of being called a Guru, a teacher! A Hindu spiritual giant is a model of modesty. Hinduism is the last bastion of practical toleration. In spite of the abuses of sister communities the Hindus have continued to love Christ, and Muhammed, and Christian and Muhammedan saints. For they do not believe in organized religion and can distinguish between spirituality and religiosity. The reason is not far to seek. As pointed out by Lord Lytton in a recent B. B. C. debate (29 November, 1948) on Hindu-Muslim relations:

> From my experience I would say the Hindu community is a very tolerant community in matters of religion, largely, I think, owing to the fact that the Hindus' attitude towards religion is intensely individualistic.

When personal perfection is kept in view and introspection guides every step, how can a man be intolerant of others struggling in their own way, and how can he be so supercilious as to try to save others without himself being perfect first?

This tolerance is at once the strength and weakness of Hinduism—the strength of Hinduism in matters spiritual and the weakness of Hinduism in matters social. Other religions, which are more careful about organizational perfection cannot tolerate individualism even in spiritual affairs to the same extent as the Hindus do. They are accordingly stronger in the social field. But spirituality is the forte of Hinduism. Nevertheless, there is no reason why Hinduism should grow in spirituality alone and not in social strength. For, as we have already noted, social weakness may ultimately undermine spirituality itself, as even at present it is doing so.

This line of argument is so convincing to some sections of the Hindu society that they have already adopted conversion as one of their tenets. The Arya Samaj of Punjab and the Hindu Mission of Bengal deserve special mention in this connection. We do not for a moment doubt the sincerity of their purpose. And many Hindus are con-

vinced that these organizations are doing yeomen's service to the Hindu society. The logic of circumstances would seem to lead to no other natural development. Yet the question of questions is, Is that the only alternative left to us? Would there be any necessity for the Hindus to undertake conversion if the other communities abstained from it? We realize that it is a big if on which we want to build our hope. We are not convinced that the other communities will easily give up organized conversion since it is socially advantageous to them. And to the extent that they are chary of giving up this pet game, the Hindus may be justified in taking counter measures in self-defence. If, therefore, we chose in this article to impugn conversion, we do so from a higher consideration than mere communal gain or loss. We are not concerned here so much with practical politics or sociology as with spiritual idealism. Some will say, 'Impossible day-dream!' But idealism always appears so to the unthinking multitude. We are not, however, so hopeless idealists as to ask any community to make an one-sided disavowal of conversion; for that may be suicidal from the communal point of view. Our arguments in fact are not addressed to communities, but to the spiritual sense in men which cuts across all communal limitations. We want the new orientation to take place in the higher levels of our being. And when that is done the foundation for better communal understanding will be more securely laid. We do not believe in mere political make-shifts, or social truce. We believe, in the language of Swami Vivekananda, in 'root-and-branch reform'. The remedy for communal wrangles lies in a change of heart, in a breadth of spiritual outlook.

III

It makes a world of difference whether we look at spirituality from the individual or institutional point of view. Spiritual giants all over the world have demonstrated that individual perfection can be carried to its greatest height irrespective of outer circumstances. Christ was crucified, but his faith remained unmoved. Muhammed was harassed off and on, but Islam remained untarnished. In the fight between social conformity and individual perfection, it is the latter that triumphed; society had ultimately to follow the new paths and not the indomitable spiritual giants the dictates of society. Society appears very often as a stolid mass which grows by shaping the individuals according to set patterns. And conversion, which is most often a social affair, results in the regimentation of the converted. By accepting a new faith, a man does not necessarily gain a fresh supply of spirituality. He simply undermines his social integrity. He has to ape the ways of others. Furthermore, he has to demonstrate by a show of orthodoxy that he has really uprooted the old belief from his heart. It is thus that converts are very often the worst persecutors of their erstwhile co-religionists.

We repeat, conversion is mostly a social phenomenon; and being a social phenomenon concerned with the masses, it cannot pitch its spiritual key too high. The highest truths are not for mass consumption. And when these have to be subjected to methods of large-scale production and distribution, they lose much of their intrinsic worth. As G. B. Shaw points out:

> The great danger of conversion in all ages has been that when the religion of the high mind has been offered to the lower mind, the lower mind, feeling its fascination without understanding it, and being incapable of rising to it, drags it down to its level by degrading it. Years ago I said that the conversion of a savage to Christianity is the conversion of Christianity to savagery.

Shaw need not have taken such extreme cases to illustrate his point. Such things are happening before our very eyes. We see that the appeal first begins in the name of spiritual

values. Then it is made in the names of religious founders: values give place to personalities. In the third stage the appeal comes in the name of Churches: personality is replaced by organization. And lastly the Satan in man is stirred in the name of material advantages and vested interests: organization is degraded into a fighting machine. This is what conversion leads religion to! The religious mind in this perverted condition is painted thus by René Guénon:

> The real motive is not the wish to attain to knowledge of the truth, but to prove oneself right in spite of opposition, or at least if one cannot convince others, to convince oneself of one's own rightness; though failure to convince others invariably occasions regret in consequence of the craving for 'proselytism' . . . .

'Everyone wants to become a spiritual leader and none a disciple', as Shri Ramakrishna remarked! In short, proselytism leads to fight and frustration and not spiritual advancement and fulfilment. Spirituality, which is calculated to establish the kingdom of God on earth, cannot certainly come through recrimination for the simple reason that bad means cannot lead to good ends. In the perfection of the bad means all the spiritual values get dissipated. In fact the best means of torpedoing all spiritual values is to launch a war of religions. It is one of the strongest temptations in Satan's armoury to dangle before men a heinous means for a commendable end and let the seduced people slide down step by step, imperceptibly and irretrievably.

Europe could not achieve religious harmony through fight; and peace came only when the Europeans got too tired of religion and turned their attention to earthly things. The crusades and the inquisitions, instead of uplifting human nature, only left rancour behind. The Semitic world established peace only by a clean sweep of the old-world beliefs. And yet no historian can assert that present-day Muhammedanism is better than what it was in the days of its founder. Nor have there been as good a number of saints and mystics in recent years in the Christian and Islamic world as in the middle ages. The followers have grown in number, but men of realization have not increased proportionately; and there is every doubt if the intensity of belief that characterized the religious people of old, is still in evidence.

IV

When religious communities take to power politics, and number comes to attain an intrinsic value, people stoop to all detestable contrivances for getting recruits. During the recent Indian famine, it was reported in the newspapers that some Muhammedan philanthropists refused to give food to Hindu destitutes from the free kitchens run by them unless the Hindus abjured their faith. Others alleged that children were being bought and converted to Islam. We quote the following from Veer Savarkar, President of the Hindu Mahasabha:

> The Moslem proselytizers would not give a morsel of food to the dying Hindu mothers or their children, . . . and would save them from that dire agony only if these unfortunate Hindu women and children renounced their cherished Hindu faith and accepted the Muslim religion. . . . Hundreds of famished Hindu children are bought . . . and sent to conversion centres by those proselytizing Moslem agencies. (*The Mahratta*, 26 November, 1943).

After pointing out that the Muhammedan destitutes were being saved by Hindu organizations with money contributed by Hindus, Veer Savarkar concludes that this help rendered to Muhammedans was leaving the proselytizers free to divert the money at their disposal to furthering their own end. He then suggests a remedy for saving the Hindus from this suicidal policy:

> Under the circumstances, Hindus, if there be any instinct of self-preservation left in them, should immediately resort to the only efficacious remedy to fight out this menace as best as they can. They should determine to send whatever money, foodstuffs, clothes they want to forward to Bengal and other starving parts for relief, by earmarking *as*

exclusively to be used for the rescue of Hindu sufferers. (*Ibid*).

The remedy is at least as drastic as the disease! It is not germane to our present discussion as to how far the newspaper reports are correct, and how widespread these nefarious activities are. Suffice it to note that actual conversion or a mere threat or suspicion of it is enough to make any self-conscious and self-respecting people wary. The consequences are communal bickerings and moral degradation. Nor does the converter gain spiritually. For can God be pleased when His children are allowed to die rather than lead an unregenerate life under the plea that men understand God's mind better than God Himself? The fact is, when such abominable conduct is tolerated by any community or silently passed over by it, the riff-raffs prosper materially under the guise of religion, but the community receives its death-blow.

In addition to such occasional outbursts of misdirected proselytizing zeal, the daily papers are full of reports of conversion through sophistry, enticement, abduction, mass violence, etc. Sophistry takes various forms; and it uses all the techniques of political propaganda—*suppressio veri, suggestio falsi*, declamation, abuse, exaggeration, and all the weapons in the arsenal of a Machiavellian demagogue. People will be found denouncing Hinduism though they have not read a line of its scriptures. Stump orators will be found crying hell fire on the heads of the idolatrous Kafirs, though their talks smack of idolatrous belief at every turn. Proselytizers can never speak with open hearts and never see things with open eyes. Set speeches, second-hand information, diabolical means, and fanaticism are often their stock-in-trade.

Enticement can be of various kinds—economic betterment, social advancement, political gain, cultural uplift, etc. Christian and Muhammedan propagandists could hold out such hopes in abundance in their early contact with the Hindus. But present conditions in India have much blunted the edge of these weapons. They are used none the less, and often with terrific results.

Conversion through abduction is not as rare as some people think. And even from the few cases reported in the papers it would appear that it is a great social menace, and ought to be put down by the combined effort of all the communities. But the pity of it is that even respectable people connive at such conversions, and it is not rare to find an abducted woman being smuggled from place to place and district to district with the help and knowledge of people considered honest in every other walk of life.

Mass conversion through violence takes place during communal riots. The Mopla riot of Malabar is an instance in point. There have also been such conversions in Bengal during the present decade. We fear that the other provinces, too, suffer occasionally in this way.

We need not linger on these despicable forms of conversion. Nor need we dilate on the various other forms that proselytization may take. We leave such proselytizers with the questions, Can a community prosper spiritually when a substantial portion of its energy is thus misdirected, and can spirituality be advanced through such nefarious means? We are sure, every community will condemn such palpable prostitution of religion, though we are not sure if they will take any active step for stopping it—herd instinct is so blind and blunt indeed!

IV

But there is a second class of proselytizers, honest people in every way, believing in their divine mission to save others and employing honest means, who are not only respected and helped by their respective communities, but are set up as their leaders. Against them it is very difficult to speak; for they are protected by the sentiments of

their own communities and their own convictions, and the evil effects of their activities are less tangible, or often imperceptible to the ordinary eyes. Nevertheless, we propose to consider their case briefly.

Who are these saviours? Are they mere intellectual propagandists or men of realization? The men of realization, history tells us, do not care for conversion, they care only for communicating spiritual truths and leave matters there. Neither Christ nor Muhammed nor, for the matter of that, any great prophet condemned other spiritual paths as wholly devilish and misguiding. It is only the small fry who introduce arbitrary scales of judgement through love of organizational triumph. As Shri Ramakrishna used to say in his homely way, 'Moss gathers only in the smaller stagnant pools.'

As for intellect, it is not the best means for spiritual communication. Spirit alone can speak to spirit; realization alone can awaken hankering in others. Mere intellect, without faith, character, non-attachment, and realization, can hardly lead others—the possibility is that it will mislead them and degrade the leader into an empty talker.

And of what worth is this solicitousness for saving others? Psychologically it is on a par with forcible conversion. As pointed out by Prof. Hauer:

> Christianity claims to possess the absolute truth, and with this claim is bound up the idea that men can only achieve salvation in one way, through Christ, and that it must send to the stake those whose faith and life do not conform, or pray for them till they quit the error of their ways for the kingdom of God. Of course there is a difference between sending men to the stake and praying for them. But the attitude which lies behind both is much the same at bottom. In both cases the whole stress is laid in forcibly rescuing men of another faith from the peril of hell fire into which the pursuits of his own path would inevitably plunge him. (Quoted in *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*).

A plausible argument in favour of conversion is the cultural one. Proselytizing missions claim to advance the culture of the backward peoples and particularly the aborigines. The hollowness of such claims has been exposed by Pearl Buck who was herself a missionary in China for many years; and Lowell, the American poet said that the Churches have killed Christ. But apart from what individuals may say, facts do not support any such extraordinary claim. The failure of organized Christianity to check the recrudescence of wars of attrition is too patent to students of history to require any special pleading. Nay, Christianity itself often promoted war in the past. Culture does not mean a mere change of social habits and widening of the intellect. It includes also the depth of morality. And this is exactly where Christianity cannot claim any special success over other religions. Besides, it has not been proved that the Eastern culture is worse than the Western, nor has it been shown that the so-called civilization is diametrically opposed to the so-called barbarism. When passion is aroused the civilized people are often worse than barbarians. Things being as they are the proselytizers often have to content themselves with thrusting Western material civilization on the Asiatics. They help in denationalizing the Eastern peoples, though the social customs substituted by them are often ruinous and diametrically opposed to Eastern customs and beliefs. In the words of *The Indian Social Reformer* (27 November, 1948):

> The main work of the Missions nowadays seems chiefly to make the Asiatic accept the domination of the White man as ordained by God. . . . The Catholics, and for that matter Christians generally until a few years ago, were unconsciously functioning as protagonists for drink. . . . The association of Christianity with drink has been a serious handicap to the reformer in India.

In our study so far, we have seen that conversion, as it is generally understood, touches only the superficial sides of man, his morality and spirituality being often left untouched. Not only this, there may often be a set-back to the inner side of man due to a forcible

change of the environment. From indifferent moralists or religious men, the converted may turn into parrot-like imbibers of foreign beliefs and customs and reckless decriers of national precepts and injunctions. This happened in the early days of contact with the West, when young Bengal believed that civilization consisted in eating beef and drinking wine. Even later, the converted could find nothing good in the civilization of India and they condemned the Indian philosophies as superstitions.

VI

A cogent argument in favour of conversion is that though there may be perversion here and there, there are some genuine souls who change faiths out of conviction and an inner hankering. To this we answer that inner hankering can very well be satisfied without flaunting and *fanfaronade*. As an illustration of what we mean, we draw the readers' attention to Shri Ramakrishna, who, though a Hindu, found no difficulty in practising Christianity and Muhammedanism and attaining realization through them. His example teaches us that the best in each religion can very well be imbibed and utilized without changing faith.

This last fact carries us to another consideration. Conversion, though successful at times, hardens the hearts of other communities against the aggressive religion and thus blocks the way for real understanding and mutual help. The increase in number is achieved at the cost of narrowing down the sphere of influence. We are firmly convinced that if Christianity and Muhammedanism had but refrained from conversion, all India would now acclaim Christ and Muhammed as the saviours of the world. Things being as they are, the real teaching of the prophets are drowned by the loud clamour of their misguided followers.

The result of any militant or for that matter of any well organized and widespread movement for converting anyone and everyone has, as we have already shown, its deleterious effect on the converting religion itself. It also results in diverting attention from true spirituality and riveting it on the outer paraphernalia. It is social conformity that takes the place of spiritual insight. The more the different religions come into clash the more do they become stereotyped and move further away from the original message; for in trying to show each one's superiority each religion succeeds only in heightening its angularity.

Thus considered from every point of view, conversion, in the accepted sense of the term, is a positive nuisance. With its departure will come peace and understanding and the fulfilment of the true ends of religion. Resurgent Hinduism is at the parting of ways. Its better sense advises it to avoid this promising but deadly snare of conversion. But fear of other communities, hope of immediate success, and the instinct of self-preservation goad it on to pay back others in their own coins. The future depends largely on the attitude of the sister communities and the high idealism of the Hindus. The triumph of the proselytizers will bring misery, fight, and degradation of true spiritual values, while the success of all-round tolerance will mean harmony and spiritual progress. The star of the former seems so far in the ascendant. We wait with trepidation for what the future has in store for India and the world, and in the meantime our heart prays that good sense may prevail in all sections of society.

THE NEED OF THE AGE

By Swami Saradananda

Even a superficial observer can easily discern how far, in every part of this earth, human life is extending its influence through education, wealth, and a spirit of adventure. It seems as though man now refuses to be confined within any limit in any field whatsoever. Not content with moving at will on land and water, he has now invented a new machine and is flying in the sky; he is satisfying his curiosity by exploring the dark bottom of the sea and descending into the craters of fiery volcanoes; he has been able to reach mountains and seashores perpetually under snow and laid bare their mystery; he has discovered that, just as in himself, life throbs in creepers, shrubs, and trees; and bringing all kinds of living things under his direct observation and analysis, he is fulfilling his goal of achieving complete knowledge. Thus by extending his influence on the five elements, viz, earth, water, fire, etc., he has discovered almost everything regarding this material earth; but not content with this, he has become inquisitive of the secrets of the distant stars and planets, and has succeeded in this as well. Nor is he wanting in effort for the exploration of the mental world. Even there, man is daily discovering new truths through sustained observation and research. In his study of the mysteries of life, he has come to know of the transformation or evolution of one species into another; in his analysis of the nature of body and mind he has been able to establish the truth that mind is a derivative of subtle and temporally limited matter; he has learnt that just like the events in the physical world, mental phenomena, too, are related by inevitable causal laws; and he has been able to find out subtle causal connections among apparently unrelated psychic events like suicide. Moreover, even though he has not been successful in discovering any conclusive proof for continuation of personality after death, he has been able through a study of history to believe in the evolution of the human race. Realizing thus that the fulfilment of individuality lies in the advancement of the race, he is now, with the help of science and organizing power, waging a relentless war against ignorance with an eye to the perfection of the racial life; and basing his hope on an infinite progress, realizable through a perpetual struggle, he is allowing his life to be drifted down the unending current of want with a view to reaching undreamt of regions in the physical and mental worlds.

Though this expansion of life has specially centred round the Western man, its repercussion on the Eastern countries is no less pronounced. The more the East and the West are coming closer together through the unavoidable influence of science, the more are the oriental habits of life being remoulded according to those of the West. This becomes clear on a consideration of the present conditions in countries like Iran, China, Japan, and India. Whatever else the future may have in store, there can be little doubt as to the future influence of the West on the East; and it seems inevitable that, in the years to come, there will be an ascendancy of Western ideas throughout the world.

If we want to ascertain the results of the expansion of life, noted above, we shall have to turn mainly to the West. Through a thoughtful scrutiny of the Western life we shall have to find out the roots and nature of that development, the growth or decay which the old-world Western values have under-

gone under their influence, and the increase or decrease in Western happiness and misery that have followed in their wake. If we can thus once determine their consequences on Western life—individual and collective—it will not be difficult to ascertain them on other times and places.

History points out unmistakably that from time of yore the severity of cold has not only been strengthening the body-consciousness in the Western mind, it has also been easily impressing on it the lesson that self-interest can best be realized through organized effort; and this has given rise to nationalism. This self-interest and this nationalism impelled Westerner to defeat other races with indomitable energy and enrich his life through spoliation. When, as a result of this, he was able to solve to some extent the problem of his material wants, his mind gradually turned inward and induced him to acquire knowledge and other fine embellishments. No sooner was his attention thus attracted to things higher than the mere struggle for existence, than he realized that his religious beliefs and the predominance of the priesthood barred his way to such a goal. He realized that the priests were not content merely with declaring that the acquisition of knowledge would lead to hell by inciting God's wrath; they were also determined to hinder him by fair means or foul from following that path. The Western man, bent on fulfilling his cherished ends, was not slow to chalk out his programme. With firm hands he cast the priests aside and followed his goal. Thus by discarding the scriptures and the creeds as well as the priests, the West guided its course along a new path, and it became its watchword never to believe or accept anything which did not admit of the irrefutable proof of direct perception by the five senses.

The West with its conviction that the validity or invalidity of things must be ascertained through reasoning and inference, etc., based on sense perception, became henceforth concerned only with verities that admit of subject-object relations; and considering the subject, the cognizer of objects, as one among the materials themselves, the West attempted to know its nature, etc., as well through an application of the means of proof already referred to. For the last four centuries the West has thus been accepting every object or every person of this world after testing him through the five senses. And it was during this period that material science overgrew the limitations and helplessness of its infancy and reached its youthful energy, hope, pleasure, and intoxicating strength.

But though this procedure resulted in an unprecedented advance in material knowledge, it could not show the West the path to spiritual knowledge. For self-control, selflessness, and introspection are the only means for the achievement of that knowledge; and a poised mind is the only instrument for self-realization. It is nothing strange, therefore, that the worldly-minded West should miss this path and should gradually become materialistic believing the body to be the Self. It is, therefore, that worldly pleasure has become the be-all and end-all of life in the West; and it is with this that the West is specially occupied. And the knowledge of Nature derived from science, being primarily employed to this end, has made the West progressively arrogant and selfish. It is because of this that one finds in the West conquest of foreign lands, oppression of foreign peoples, deep discontent, and thirst for wealth due to poverty, side by side with guns dealing death, cannon thundering like doom's day, social stratification based on wealth, and opulence unparalleled anywhere. It is because of this, again, that we can see how even after reaching the height of enjoyment, the poverty of soul of the West is not removed; and a mere belief in the perpetuation of the race even after the individual's death, cannot give it any solace. After a strenuous search, the

West has now realized that sense knowledge can never enable it to discover the nature of that entity which is beyond time and space. Science gives indication of that and then recoils, since that is totally beyond its reach and comprehension. Consequently, the defeat of that deity which was the source of its strength and which bestowed on it all pleasure and plenty, has increased the agony of the Western mind and left it totally helpless.

From this study of the history of the Western life we find that at the root of its predominance lie materialism, selfishness, and lack of spiritual faith. Therefore, if one aspires to similar achievements either in social or individual life, one will have to build one's life on that same foundation. As a proof of this we find that in Japan and other Eastern countries, which have resolved to reconstruct their national lives on the Western model, there have appeared all the vices of the West along with patriotism and nationalism. This is the inevitable result of coming under Western influence. This becomes clearer to us on a consideration of the change that has come over the national life of India as a consequence of Western contact.

The question arises here, Was there any such expression as Indian national life before India came into touch with the West? In answer we may say that though the expression as such might not have existed, there can be little doubt as to the currency of the idea connoted by it; for even then India as a whole adored the Gurus, the Ganges, the Gâyatri, and the Gita—even then a respect for cows was in evidence everywhere—even then every Indian, irrespective of age and sex, was inspired by, and modelled his life on, the same ideology derived from such scriptures as the *Râmâyana*, the *Mahâbhârata*, etc.; and the intelligentsia of the different localities expressed their ideas among themselves in Sanskrit. Many other unifying links like these may be cited; and it can be easily realized that religion and religious practices were the main factors in forging these links.

Founded as the Indian national life was on religion, its civilization was derived from a unique and distinct material. In short, self-control was the life-inspiration of this civilization. India taught her citizens as well as the nation to accept self-control as the pivotal point in their lives. She put everyone constantly in mind of the fact that enjoyment has its *raison d'etre* merely as a spring-board for renunciation, and this life as a preparation for the next; and thus she guided the individual and national lives to the highest goal. It is because of this that her castes have not so far given rise to class-struggle which ensues from a clash of interests. For what cause for discontent can a man have when he can achieve the greatest end of life, viz, spiritual realization and salvation, by performing in a non-attached way the duties of the class or caste in which birth has placed him? That in ancient India, unlike in the West, there was no class-struggle centring round the differences in pleasures and privileges among the classes, is due to the fact that every social unit had an equal right to the highest goal of life. Bearing these facts about ancient India in mind, we should notice the changes that have come over her after she came into contact with the West.

It was but natural and inevitable that from the date of the conquest of India by the West there should come a striking change in her system of distribution of the national wealth. But the Western influence did not stop with disturbing this particular aspect of the national life; it also brought about a new transformation in those basic principles with which the Indian genius ordered the individual and national lives. That enjoyment should end in renunciation, was condemned by the West as a mere self-interested propaganda by the priesthood; belief in an after-life and the soul was considered as a mere poetic fancy; and what rule could be

more inequitous than that which asked a man to confine himself till death to the position in life which birth had given him? India, too, took this lesson gradually to heart: and discarding her ancient ideal, in which renunciation and self-denial predominated, she hankered after more enjoyment. Thus came about a break with her former tradition and belief; and with the progress of atheism, love of imitation, and want of self-confidence, she became absolutely supine like some spineless creatures. India now came to believe that all she had so far hugged to her bosom and observed meticulously, were quite superstitious: after all, the West with its scientific knowledge, might be right when it decried the Indian traditions as unpolished and half-barbarous. Carried away by a lust for enjoyment, India forgot her past history and her ancient glory. This self-forgetfulness led to intellectual deterioration, which in its turn threatened to destroy her national life. But earthly enjoyment, too, escaped her grasp, as she had to depend on others for its fulfilment. Thus, being decoyed from both pleasure and perfection, she only aped others; and with her sail swelling with the wind of desire, she drifted aimlessly like a ship without a helmsman.

The air then became thick with the cry that India never had a national life. It was through the kindness of the West that she was just getting an inkling of that life; but there were innumerable impediments against its full realization. That irremediable religiousness of hers, had been her undoing. That idolatry, consisting in the worship of numberless gods and goddesses, had checked her progress. Destroy it, uproot it, and then only will the Indian genius breath freely! Christianity and a form of monotheism based on it began to be preached. In imitation of the West senile India began to be taught from pulpits and platforms the advantages of such things as politics, sociology, widow-remarriage, and feminism; but instead of bringing relief, this only resulted in multiplying her want and heightening agony evermore. Railways, telegraphs, and all the other paraphernalia of Western civilization came one by one to India; but all in vain. All these attempts fell absolutely short of finding out and bringing back, once more, into play that inspiration which kept India alive. Medicines were not applied to the limb actually ailing; and so how could the ailment subside? How could India be re-invigorated without a resuscitation of India's spirituality? How could the materialistic West remove that spiritual poverty which her own ideologies had brought about? Being itself unsuccessful how could the West make others succeed?

It cannot, of course, be asserted that before the Western conquest, Indian national life was free from all blemishes. But the national corpus being alive, there was noticeable in it a sustained and spontaneous effort to eliminate such drawbacks. The absence of such effort in the nation and society at present would go to prove that the administration of doses in the form of Western influence is not only curing the patient but killing her also.

It is evident, therefore, that the decline of religion in the West is extending its domain in India as well. In fact, one is awe-struck to consider how low a mark this decline has reached everywhere in the present-day world. If there is any such thing as religion, and if that is achievable by man through God's grace, then it is undoubtedly a fact that the pleasure-driven human life of the present age has far receded from that ideal. It is because of this that, though the expansion of life through science has put man in possession of pleasures, it has not been able to bring him peace. Who can remedy this? Who can it be whose heart will catch the ever-resounding cry of agony and lamentation, impelling him thus to turn his back to all means of pleasure and direct all his energies to finding a new spiritual

path suitable for the age? Who will again remove the irreligiousness of the East and the West and teach humanity to direct its life along a new peaceful path?

Through the Gita the Lord has promised that whenever there will set in a decline in the world's spirituality, He will descend as an embodied being with the help of His power of Mâyâ, and He will again vouchsafe peace to humanity by stemming the tide. Will not the present-day feeling of want and discontent induce Him to incarnate?

Dear reader, the need of the age has really accomplished this—God has really incarnated again as a world teacher! Be comforted by hearing his holy words of blessing: 'As many beliefs, so many paths,' 'Whatever you do with the fullest sincerity, will indeed lead you to God.' With a mind fully poised, meditate on his super-normal renunciation and self-mortification for bringing back super-sensuous knowledge; and let us both be purified by a study of his holy and passion-free life according to the best of our ability.

ICY HOME OF THE GANGES

By Swami Apurvananda

(Continued)

Gangotri

It was a lovely morning and the bright rays of the sun occasionally fell on us through the thick branches of the deodars. There was almost a spiritual quality about the atmosphere around us and one somehow felt that sacred Gangotri was not far off. The silence was so deep that even the sound of heart-beats seemed disturbing. As we advanced quickly through the dense forest, full of excitement to reach Gangotri as soon as possible, we heard a booming sound and soon discovered that it came from a gorgeous waterfall made by the Ganges in this part of its course. The waters of the holy river here fell from a height of about fifty feet into a huge natural basin of stone. They fell with such force that the resulting spray spread over a large area. This place is known as Gauri Kund. The rays of the sun falling on the foaming water in the basin, produced all the seven colours of the rainbow; while the fall of the water from the great height above sounded like the symbolic 'Om'. A few Sâdhus were sitting near by under the deodars in deep meditation. The whole scene was so beautiful and awe-inspiring that we found it difficult to tear ourselves away.

We had proceeded not more than a furlong after leaving Gauri Kund, when we saw in the distance the gleaming towers of the temple of Gangotri. The sight of this temple thrilled me with sudden joy and I ran towards it in a fit of excitement. On reaching the holy precincts, I fell on my knees before the image of the river goddess, overcome by emotion. I remained in this position oblivious of my surroundings, and felt for a moment as if all my desires had been fulfilled. At last, my companions called me away and we did the customary round of the temple three times, notwithstanding the rush of pilgrims. Special worship was going on inside the temple, while a large number of pilgrims were performing various other ceremonies all around it right up to the bank of the Ganges. The whole scene was one of religious festival, and the air rang with the constant sound of 'Jai!' in honour of Mother Ganges.

With hearts full of joy we left the temple and went in search of some place where we could leave our belongings before going for the customary bath in the holy river. All the three good Dharmashâlâs were already packed to capacity with pilgrims, and after much persuasion I prevailed upon the man in charge of Kambli Baba's Dharmashâlâ to open for us an isolated room on the ground floor of an unused Dharmashâlâ which had been badly damaged the previous year by the falling of a huge boulder. This boulder had also smashed to pieces one of the towers of the temple of Gangotri which had been rebuilt some years ago by a Maharaja at a huge cost. We were told that in July of the previous year after there had been continuous heavy rain for two days, the sky had cleared up and there was calm everywhere. But at about 2 p.m.—when the door of the temple was closed after the noon service and the priests and pilgrims were taking rest—a huge boulder weighing more than a thousand maunds suddenly got dislodged from the adjacent mountain, and rolling down with a terrific force and velocity, first smashed to bits more than half of a Dharmashâlâ and then fell on one of the towers of the temple. The strangest feature of this sudden catastrophe was that not a single life was lost although there were more than a thousand people at Gangotri at the time!

Luckily there had been no one in the ill-fated Dharmashâlâ when the boulder fell, but the damaged portion remained to be repaired and no pilgrim had dared to occupy even the undamaged portion since the day of the accident. As we had, however, no other place to stay in, we were compelled to occupy a room in this undamaged portion. Leaving our things there, we went for a plunge into the Ganges. It was nearly ten o'clock then and the sun, which was already up in a clear, blue sky, shone brightly on the chain of high mountains which surrounded Gangotri. The heat of the sun made even the strong, icy wind blowing from the Ganges quite pleasant. The river bank which is not more than a hundred yards from the temple was already full of pilgrims: some bathing, some performing ceremonial rites, some chanting and singing. It was by no means easy to take a plunge in the swiftly-flowing, icy water of the Ganges in this place, especially as the river bed is strewn here with boulders of various sizes. Nevertheless, I took the risk of entering the water and caught hold of a boulder to prevent being carried away by the swift current. I was richly compensated for my daring, because when I came out of the water I felt as if my body and mind had been transformed, and a sense of unspeakable joy pervaded my whole being.

When the rush of pilgrims to the temple had abated a little, we were taken in by a priest for the ceremonial worship of the deities. In the centre of the altar was a beautiful image of the Ganges goddess while on either side were the images of the goddesses Jamunâ and Sarasvati—all standing. On a lower pedestal, among other gods and goddesses, were the images of Lord Shiva and saints like Shankara. While worshipping these images, we could feel the intense spiritual atmosphere created by the earnest prayers and chanting of many devout pilgrims who had come there from all parts of India. We left the temple with hearts full of joy; and wanting to be alone, I went and sat on a big boulder by the side of the Ganges. I remained sitting there, lost in thought, till one of my companions came to call me for meals.

Though I have visited almost all the important places of pilgrimage in the Himalayas, I found none of them possessing such an all-round beauty—appealing to almost every type of person and imagination—as Gangotri. Situated at an altitude of about eleven thousand feet at the foot of a beautiful mountain, with the majestic Ganges

flowing by, it is protected on all sides by lofty, snow-capped mountain ranges covered on the lower slopes with luxuriant forests of deodar. It is a truly worthy monument to the great Advaitist Shankara, who first established it as a place of pilgrimage. It is said that when Shankara was wandering as a pilgrim in the Himalayas with some of his disciples, he suddenly made up his mind to visit the real source of the Ganges—Gomukhi. When, in spite of the total absence of any track, they at last reached the sacred spot, Shankara is said to have seen a vision of the holy Ganges coming down to the earth from heaven! After performing all the rites sacred to the goddess, Shankara turned back with his disciples, but on the way while going up and coming down, they suffered terrible hardships on account of frequent snow-storms and other difficulties. Their lives were at stake on several occasions. When at last they reached the spot which is now called Gangotri, Shankara was in an ecstatic mood and is said to have heard a divine voice asking him to install the images of Lord Shiva and Mother Ganges there in a temple, for the worship of future pilgrims. When the saint communicated this message to his disciples, one of them, who was a Raja, immediately ordered the building of the temple.

Shankara is said to have lived happily for a few days at Gangotri before he finally left with his disciples. The priests of Gangotri have no doubt that the images of the Ganges goddess and of Lord Shiva, now in the temple, were originally installed by Shankara whose image is also worshipped in the temple.

The origin of the river which flows by Gangotri, is beautifully described in *Kedâra Khanda*, one of the chapters of the *Skanda Purâna*. It is there said that Lord Shiva was mightily pleased with the hard austerities of King Bhagiratha, who had performed severe Tapasyâ for a thousand years for the salvation of the souls of his ancestors who had all been burnt to ashes by the anger of a Rishi. Shiva, thereupon, allowed the holy Ganges, which had always remained concealed in the matted locks of his hair, to come down on earth to purify the sins of the King's ancestors. As soon as the great river was let loose, she began to pour down in strong currents of transparent water on to a mountain top. Unable to withstand the tremendous pressure, the mountain collapsed, and the river fell on the earth in three swift currents. One of them, coming down from Gomukhi and flowing past Gangotri, gave salvation to King Bhagiratha's ancestors and was, therefore, known as the Bhâgirathi Gangâ. The second current which flowed through Badrinarayan was known as Alakânandâ Gangâ; and the third one which flowed through Kedarnath was known as Mandâkini or Kumudvati Gangâ.

Towards Gomukhi

After a hurried meal we got ready for our difficult trek to Gomukhi which required provisions that would last for at least a week. It was nearly 2 p.m. when our party of seven, including the guide and coolies, left the Dharmashâlâ. Some of the pilgrims who had come with us as far as Gangotri and whom we had come to know, now came as far as the river bank to see us off. An old Nepalese lady among them began to weep at the thought of the dangers of our journey. Before crossing the tottering wooden bridge on the Ganges we bowed down to the temple and sent a silent prayer to the goddess for her protection. The nervousness shown by our pilgrim friends for our safety made us also feel nervous in turn, and for a moment the thought entered my mind that, perhaps, we might never return from this dangerous trek. The only thing to do was to pray to the all-merciful Lord for our safety and this prayer soon drove away the fear.

Our way now lay through the trackless bed of the Ganges which consisted of boulders of various sizes. Some of these boulders were very difficult to

negotiate and we had often to crawl on all fours before we could advance. It was then that we really appreciated our guide's wisdom in asking us to leave our hill-sticks behind at Gangotri. Before taking a turn to the left we took a last look at the temple of Gangotri. We had not, however, proceeded far when our attention was suddenly drawn by the sound of someone calling and whistling to us from behind. Looking back we found that a man was running towards us and was calling to us to stop. We waited, and as soon as the man came near, we recognized Tekram, one of the Nepalese pilgrims who had accompanied us with his party all the way from Jumnotri to Gangotri.

On approaching us, Tekram fell on his knees and begged me to allow him to accompany us to Gomukhi. He explained that he had intended from the beginning to go along with us but that his companions began to weep at the idea and prevented him from going. When, however, he saw us finally depart, his inner urge to join our expedition became irresistible and he slipped away without the knowledge of any of his companions, taking with him only one blanket and a little quantity of rice and wheat flour. Tekram's earnest pleading, with almost tears in his eyes, to be allowed to go with us was so touching that we had not the heart to turn him away. In spite of my reminding him of the great perils of this journey and of his family responsibilities in contrast to the freedom of Sannyâsins like me and my companion, he remained adamant and I had at last to yield to his entreaties. Tekram's joy at his success knew no bounds and he began to shout, 'Jai! Gangâ Mâi Ki Jai!' at the top of his voice until the whole place reverberated with this triumphant cry.

Although it was quite clear and the sun was shining brightly when we left Gangotri about an hour and a half back, thick clouds now began to gather, and there were all indications of impending rainfall. Our guide became very concerned at this, saying that, if it rained, no further advance would be possible, because landslides would follow the rainfall and no one knew from which side the boulders would roll down. While we were thinking of what best to do in the circumstances, rain began to fall in torrents, and as there was no place of shelter we had to stand by the side of some large boulders for protection. Proceeding even a single step was impossible, and soon the clouds became so thick and dark that nothing was visible within a distance of twenty yards. There was, besides, a piercing, icy wind which went through our bones and made us tremble with the cold. As we were almost on the point of despair at our helpless condition, the clouds suddenly began to disperse under the influence of a strong wind which luckily rose from the proper direction, and the sun came out again in all his glory. Although our guide was against further progress owing to the danger of landslides, we finally decided to take the risk in order to avoid the greater risk of being without any shelter for the night in that wind-swept river bed.

A Real Test

When we had walked a little further among the boulders, we were suddenly confronted by a steep mountain barrier which had to be crossed before we could proceed any further. This mountain was covered with a thick forest, but there was no track through it and the Ganges was flowing at its foot in a furious torrent. The guide led the way and Tekram used his sharp Bhujâli (long Nepalese knife) to cut a way for us through the forest. The climb was very steep and slippery and we had to catch hold of grass and small plants to keep our foothold. In this way it took us nearly an hour to cross the barrier and we finally came upon a snow-field stretching more than half a mile. The hard snow had become so cold and slippery that it was painful to walk over it in our canvas shoes, which made the feet completely numb.

We at last came to an ice-bridge across the Ganges and wanted to cross it, but were prevented by the guide on the ground that this same sort of bridge might not be available for re-crossing the furious river at a suitable place. We, therefore, decided to proceed by the side of the river as far as possible. The difficulty was that we were going to Gomukhi at a time of the year when the ice was melting and consequently the snow-bed of the Ganges which is the usual means of communication between Gangotri and Gomukhi had melted down.

After leaving Gangotri, we did not find any habitation whatsoever and consequently no sign of a track anywhere. During the pilgrimage season only a few ascetics generally visit Gomukhi, and neither they, nor the Bhutias who sometimes bring their sheep and goats to these parts for grazing, require any beaten track. The swift-flowing current of the Ganges was, therefore, the only sure indicator of the direction to its primal source, Gomukhi. Because of the difficulty of our boulder-strewn path we had to move very cautiously, and our speed in many places was hardly a mile per hour. As we were advancing slowly in this manner, we saw in the distance a barren hill rising from the bed of the Ganges. The guide said that our reaching Gomukhi depended upon our ability to cross a portion of this hill. When we came near we found that the hill which rose more than five hundred feet was composed mostly of sand, gravel, and small boulders, and our hopes of crossing it almost vanished. The Ganges rushed along with tremendous force about two hundred feet below the place where we were standing, and its roaring noise suppressed all other sounds. Our guide decided to investigate the possibility of crossing the hill from another side, and asking us to wait disappeared. We awaited his return in awful suspense, and although the scene around, lighted by the rays of the setting sun, was very beautiful, it failed to inspire us in our dejected mood. As the sun was gradually setting, we were faced with the prospect of spending the night in that shelterless place, with the danger of loose boulders rolling down on us from that ugly hill. We at last saw the guide slowly coming down from the hill, but in another direction. After hearing what he had to say, we made up our minds in spite of obvious dangers to cross somehow that portion of the hill, near its foot, which would bring us to a place of comparative safety before nightfall. Tekram volunteered to lead the party and we all took off our shoes to lessen the chances of slipping on the loose gravel. As we advanced cautiously, Tekram cleverly made rough steps for us by digging in his toes into the sand and gravel, while he clung fast to the hill with both his arms. Immediately behind Tekram was one of our Pâhâri companions and the rest of us followed close behind. We had crossed in that way almost half of the most perilous portion of that treacherous hill, when a huge boulder rolled down in great force between Tekram and the Pâhâri behind him. The roar of the Ganges below us was so loud that we only realized what had happened when we actually heard the still louder thud of the boulder as it struck the ground. The dislodging of this boulder brought in its train a lot of loose sand and gravel which now began to fall on us. It was a moment of great suspense and we knew that a single false step might hurl most of us down two-hundred feet into the stony bed of the angry river. I asked my companions to keep calm, with faith in the mercy of God, and to move forward courageously, keeping their eyes always in front of them. When we at last reached a place of safety, we sat down for a little rest with our hearts full of gratitude to the Lord for saving our lives.

Chirbasa

That hair-breadth escape from death gave us courage and confidence for the

remaining stages of our perilous journey because it made us feel that the All-merciful Lord would protect us till the very end. We now slowly made our way, in turn, through thick forests, ravines, and boulder-strewn areas, keeping most of the way by the side of the Ganges. Although the day's happenings and exertion had brought on a feeling of extreme fatigue, we pushed on as fast as we could in order to reach a safe place of encampment before nightfall. Before leaving Gangotri it was decided that we should stop for the night at a place called Chirbasa, only eight miles away from our starting point. As the guide now said that we were nearing Chirbasa, I began to be on the lookout for a suitable place to pass the night in. Just before it became dark we reached a place in the jungle which we selected as our camping ground. Though the Ganges was flowing down below, there was a spring of clear water near by, and the place was covered with a thick jungle of Bhurja[1] trees. We soon began to erect a temporary shelter for the night with branches of trees, and for this purpose we used the axes and hatchets which we had brought from Dharali, while Tekram had his sharp Nepali knife always ready for use. In the meantime, our guide and the Bhutia cooly went in search of fuel to make a fire. Before it became dark we had completed the erection of the shelter, and all of us sat round the big fire which had by then been lighted.

Just as the fire lighted up our faces, the last rays of the setting sun were lighting up the top of the mountain opposite. As the stars came out slowly, I felt like being alone, and leaving my companions, went and sat by the side of the Ganges. The only sound which made music with the voice of the all-pervading silence was that which came from the river flowing down below. I sat there long, listening to that strange melody, and when I returned to our shelter the moon was peeping through the thick branches and foliage of the Bhurja trees. Seated comfortably round the roaring fire, Tekram was chanting from the *Râmâyana*, while one of the Sannyâsins was singing: 'Why in this world any longer, O my Mind? Let us go to that region where, day and night, the full moon resides, in bliss,' etc. After partaking of our simple fare we got ready for our well-earned rest for the night. As the altitude of our camp was about 13,000 feet the cold outside was intense and sleep would have been impossible but for that fire which we kept blazing all the time. One of us had to keep vigil, by turn, to keep the fire burning all the night while the others slept. Our guide, seeing a patch of thick cloud in the sky, said there might be rain later on in the night; but none of us liked to believe this unpleasant possibility, and all except the fire-watcher went to sleep, lulled by the musical roar of the Ganges. It was nearly three o'clock when, as predicted by the guide, rain actually began to fall. At first we ignored it, but soon sleep became impossible as the water leaked through our shelter and made our beds wet. There was no other help but to roll up our beds and sit round the fire once more, this time with our umbrellas open. We tried to keep up our spirits by chanting the name of the Lord in chorus; but as the continuing downpour began to extinguish the fire, we shivered with cold and waited impatiently for the dawn.

(*To be concluded*)

[1] A variety of the birch tree (Betula Bhurja), the bark of which is used for writing.

SCULPTURE REPRESENTING 'MOTHER AND CHILD'

By U. C. Bhattacharya, M.A.

The Rajputana Museum at Ajmer possesses a noteworthy sculpture representing a 'Mother and Child' finely carved on a black stone slab measuring 2′6″ × 1′1″ × 8″.[1] In this alto-relief we find a sleeping female reclining on her left side upon a four-poster bedstead. She supports her head on her left palm. A child lies sprawling on a cushion beside the mother, touching her left breast with one of its hands, and seems to be looking at her face joyfully. There is a seated female attendant who (as we know from other complete specimens[2]) is shampooing her left foot, which is broken in the present sculpture. A row of ten standing figures as described below is sculptured behind the sleeping lady :

From right :—(1) Female figure
(2) Male figure
(3) Male figure
(4) Female figure holding a fan
(5) Male figure with a child held in both hands
(6) Female figure with outstretched hands (? Devaki) eager to receive the child from the hands of No. 5.
(7) Male figure holding a club
(8) Male figure with mace
(9) Female attendant holding a fly-whisk
(10) Female attendant holding a fly-whisk.

The story referred to in similar sculptures representing a sleeping mother with her child has been differently explained by different scholars. Some writers hold that such charming composition relates to the birth of Mahavira or Siddhartha.[3] One scholar even finds in it an attempt to represent Sadyojâta-Maheshvara.[4] But the majority of them favours the view that such sculptures really represent infant Krishna nursed by his mother Devaki. I shall try to prove in this note that the Rajputana Museum relief and other exactly similar pieces do not represent Devaki in the prison-house of Kamsa, but really represent Yashodâ (the wife of Nanda of Gokula) reposing with infant Krishna conveyed to her couch by Vasudeva[5] while she was asleep after delivery.

On a careful examination of the ten standing figures mentioned above our particular attention is drawn to the male and female figures numbered 5 and 6. I identify them as Vasudeva holding in his two hands the newly born daughter of Nanda's wife Yashodâ, and Devaki (Vasudeva's wife) eager to have that child. Figures 7 and 8 very probably show Kamsa's guards who have hastened to the spot hearing the cries of the infant. Of the other standing figures,

[1] This exhibit (Museum No. 448/1) was acquired from a place called Arthunâ, in the Banswara State of Rajputana, situated about 24 miles west of Banswara town. In inscriptions of the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. we find 'Ârattunaka' and 'Uttunaka' which are no doubt the old names of Arthunâ.

[2] Cf. Indian Museum No. Gr. 1 and Rajshahi Museum No. H (d) 1/281. These two interesting sculptures have been reprodûced in R. D. Banerjee's *Eastern Indian School of Medieval Sculpture*—vide plates XLIX and L.

[3] Anderson's *Catalogue and Hand-book of Archaeological Collection in the Indian Museum*, page 259.

[4] Bhattasali's *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, page 134 ff.

[5] *Hindu Mythology* by Wilkins, page 202.

Nos. 4, 9, and 10 may be taken as three female attendants with fan and fly-whisks (Châmara). Thus we see that in the Rajputana Museum relief the sculptor aimed at showing what happened both at Gokula and Mathura just after Krishna's birth. From the Purânas we know that while Krishna was lying safe on a couch at Yashodâ's side at Gokula and joyfully sucking milk from her breast, in the prison-house of Kamsa at Mathura poor Vasudeva was handing over Yashodâ's daughter to Devaki and immediately after Kamsa's guards Nos. 7 and 8 were awakened and brought to the scene by the cries of this infant. The following passages from the *Vishnu Purâna* may be given here[6]—

At that time Yashodâ was also influenced by Yoganidrâ[7] whom she had given birth as her daughter and whom the wise Vasudeva took up placing his own son in her place by the side of the mother (i.e., *Yashodâ*). He then came back home. When Yashodâ awoke, she found that she had been delivered of a boy as black as the dark lotus-leaves and she was greatly delighted. Vasudeva taking the female child of Yashodâ reached his house (i.e., *prison-house where Kamsa detained Vasudeva and his wife Devaki*[8]) unperceived. . . . The guards were awakened by the cry of the new-born babe, and starting up they informed Kamsa that Devaki had given birth to a child. Kamsa immediately went to the house of Vasudeva where he got hold of the infant.

There is a similar passage in the *Agni Purâna*[9] which is also worth quoting here—

Krishna was the issue of the eighth conception. . . . Hymned by Vasudeva and Devaki he was born as a boy with two arms. From fear of Kamsa Vasudeva placed him on Yashodâ's bed and taking her girl placed her on Devaki's bed. Hearing the cries of the baby, Kamsa threw her on a rock saying, 'The child of thy eighth conception is my death', although he was prevented by Devaki.

From the Paurânic passages cited above it is quite clear that as soon as Devaki gave birth to her eighth son Krishna, Vasudeva (husband of Devaki) conveyed the child to the couch of Yashodâ with a view to saving Krishna from being killed by Kamsa. As Devaki herself knew that her son's life was at stake, it was quite unthinkable that she would be reposing so peacefully as we find it represented in the sculpture in question. I have already suggested that Vasudeva and Devaki are there among the standing figures (Nos. 5 and 6) sculptured behind the mother. There Vasudeva is shown as holding a child in his two hands, and Devaki, who stands near beside her husband, as extending her hands to have the same child. This is quite in keeping with the extreme anxiety of a mother who had to hand over her child to Vasudeva soon after delivery. The representation of Devaki in this attitude and her fear of Kamsa, preclude the possibility of her sleeping peacefully and at the same time being looked after so very carefully by a number of female attendants either shampooing her feet or fanning her. These comforts for Devaki are surely unthinkable in the prison-house of Kamsa. As we know it from the Purânas, at Krishna's birth there was danger in delay. Vasudeva had to carry the newly born child immediately away to save it from being killed by Kamsa.[10] In these circumstances we should not identify the mother, represented as slumbering so peacefully, with Devaki. The sculpture under consideration suggests a state of undisturbed repose; and if the mother be taken as Devaki, it stands in direct contrast to the Paurânic legends relating to the birth of Krishna in the prison-house of Kamsa. On the other hand if the sleeping mother be taken as Krishna's foster-mother Yashodâ—the wife of Nanda-Gopa of Gokula—we find that the identification fits in with the story narrated in different Purânas. Yashodâ was influenced by 'Yoganidrâ' soon after delivery, as we know it from the *Vishnu*

[6] *Vishnu Purâna*—(Edited by M. N. Dutt-Shastri), Part V, Section III.

[7] Yoganidra is 'a state of half meditation half sleep'. It also means 'Vishnu's sleep personified as a goddess and said to be a form of Durgâ'—Monier Williams.

[8] Words in italic are mine.

[9] *Agni Purâna*—Chapter XII (Edited by M. N. Dutt-Shastri).

[10] *Epics, Myths and Legends of India* by P. Thomas—page 18.

Purâna passage quoted above. So there is nothing wrong in sculpturing her in a state of undisturbed repose with infant Krishna placed beside her by Vasudeva, 'while she was asleep after child-birth'. The representation of Yashodâ with infant Krishna sucking milk from her breast is also supported by the following passage of the *Shritatvanidhi* :

पिबन्तं च स्तनं मातुर्मुखं संवीक्ष्य सस्मितम् ।
अङ्गुल्यग्रैस्तनं चान्यं स्पृशन्तं च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥
यशोदाङ्कस्थितं गोपं ध्यायेत्पुत्रप्रदं सदा ।

Stylistically this and other images obtained from the ruins of old temples at Arthunâ[11] may be assigned to the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. Such a date is further supported by the fact that two Sarasvati images from Arthunâ which are exhibited in the Rajputana Museum at Ajmer bear on their pedestals inscriptions dated Samvat 1254[12] (=1197 A.D.) and 1256[13] (=1199 A.D.). We have epigraphic evidences of the building of a number of temples at Arthunâ by the Paramâra Princes Châmundarâja[14] and Vijayarâja[15] during the period between 1080 A.D. and 1109 A.D. On all these grounds I am in favour of assigning the sculpture dealt with in the present note to about early twelfth century A.D.

[11] There are about half a dozen Medieval images from Arthunâ exhibited in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.

[12] Jain Sarasvati (Rajputana Museum exhibit No. 58).

[13] Jain Sarasvati (Rajputana Museum exhibit No. 57).

[14] Stone inscription of the time of Châmundarâja dated Samvat 1137 (vide *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XIX, p. 24, No. 148).

[15] Stone inscription of the time of Vijayarâja dated Samvat 1166 (vide *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XIX, page 29, No. 179).

THE GILGIT MANUSCRIPTS OF BUDDHISM

BY BHIKSHU BRAHMABODHI

(*Concluded*)

The Gilgit Mss. are a revelation to the Buddhist world as they have brought out the hitherto missing Sanskrit scriptures of Buddhism which were existing only in Chinese or Tibetan translation. When these Mss. were copied the later Sahis were ruling over the region round about Udbhandpur up to Gilgit. The Mss. copied for Yuang Chwang were also of this same time as the Gilgit Mss. and it is interesting to note that the Gupta characters preserved by the Chinese for transcribing the Sanskrit Mantras in their Chinese translations are similar to those found in the Gilgit Mss. The language of the Mss. is usually Buddhist Sanskrit which does not follow the canons of Panini. Dr. Nalinaksha Dutta thinks that the compiler worked on a Prakrit original and found difficulty in Sanskritizing the Prakrit words. The Sanskritization and Pali-ization of words have been noticed in a verse by this esteemed scholar. Buddhist scholars are of opinion that though the Sutra and Vinaya Pitakas originated in Magadha, the Abhidharma must have emerged in Kashmir. The Kashmirian Buddhists were, therefore, frequently referred to as Abhidharmikas. Moreover, the *Vibhâsa-shâstras*, which are the creations of Kashmir, dealt more with Abhidharma. A Kashmirian, Prince Yashomitra, wrote a Tikâ on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharma Kosha* and *Bhâsya*. Now the *Vibhâsa-shâstra* is lost in Sanskrit and is preserved only in its Chinese translation, which has not yet been adequately studied. A Hinayana sect of Buddhism prevailed in Northern India and Kashmir in the post-Ashokan and particularly in the Kushan period. This sect developed Sanskrit Pitakas parallel to Pali Pitakas. Since the discoveries of the fragments of Sanskrit Sutras and Vinaya texts in Eastern Turkistan and

neighbouring places, Buddhist scholars were hoping to get more of them somewhere, and Gilgit has yielded a lot of them. The Gilgit Mss. are similar to the Bower Mss. and to those found in Central Asia and Eastern Turkistan. Most of these valuable Mss. were known to the scholars only through their Chinese and Tibetan translations, and none dreamt of finding their Sanskrit originals. It is surprising that not a single Sanskrit original of Buddhist works was so far found in India with the rare exception of *Manjushrimula-kalpa*, which has since been published in the Trivandrum Sanskrit series. All the originals have come from Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, Mongolia, China, Nepal, etc. The Gilgit Mss. are the only ones discovered in India.

The first volume of the Gilgit Mss. published by the Research Department of the Kashmir Government, contains about 250 pages of which 150 pages publish Texts and the rest contains introductions to the texts and a summary of Kashmir Buddhism by Dr. N. Dutta, the learned editor of the texts. The six books that are published in this volume are (1) *Bhaishajya-guru-sutram*, (2) *Ekâdashamukham*, (3) *Hayagrivavidyâ*, (4) *Sarva-Tathâgata-adhisthâna*, (5) *Shrimahâdevi-vyâkaranam*, and (6) *Ajitasena-vyâkaranam*. The published volume II of the Gilgit Mss. contains *Samâdhi-râja-sutram*, which is a considerably big text covering about 215 pages in print divided into 16 chapters. The third volume (part II) contains *Vinaya Vastu* of Mulasarvâstivâda. It is also a big text covering more than 200 pages. This text is divided into four books—*Chivara-vastu*, *Kathina-vastu*, *Kosambaka-vastu*, and *Karma-vastu*. The Sanskrit Vinaya is divided into four books entitled (1) *Vinaya-vastu*, (2) *Pratimoksha Sutra and Vinaya-vibhanga*, (3) *Vinaya-khsudraka-vastu*, and (4) *Vinayottara-grantha* corresponding to the four divisions of the Pali Vinaya text, viz, (1) *Mahâvagga*, (2) *Sutta-vibhanga*, (3) *Chulla-vagga*, and (4) *Paribara-patha*. Dr. N. Dutta says that there are many agreements, sometimes verbatim, between the Sanskrit and Pali versions of the Vinaya; but there is a wide divergence in the contents. *Pravrajyâ-vastu*, *Posada-vastu*, *Pravarana-vastu*, *Charma-vastu*, *Varsha-vastu*, and *Vaishajya-vastu* are being edited by Dr. P. C. Bagchi of Calcutta and will be included in the forthcoming volume, i.e., third volume, part I. Mss. of *Pândulohitaka-vastu*, *Pudgala-vastu*, *Pâribhâshika-vastu*, *Posadhasthahana-vastu*, and *Sanghabhedaka-vastu* have also been found and will be edited and published later. In the *Mahavyutpâda* (276) appear names of seventeen Vastus of which seven or eight have got different names. All the three volumes published are nicely got up and printed in good paper and will adorn the library in which they will be placed. The extraordinary care, skill, and scholarship of Dr. Dutta, the esteemed editor, leave nothing to be desired about the volumes which have been printed under his personal care at Calcutta.

Something about the texts published, and we will conclude this long dissertation on the Gilgit Mss. *Bhaishajya-guru-sutra* of the first volume is a Mahayana Sutra and is quoted copiously in the *Shikshâ-samuchchaya* of Shantideva. The work deals with the resolutions (Mahâpranidhânas) of one of the seven Buddhas called Bhaishajya-guru who, according to Prof. Paul Pelliot, is one of the most popular Buddhas in China, Japan, and Tibet. His name in Chinese is Bhashajya-guru Vaidurya-prabha. From its Chinese and Tibetan translations it is learnt that the present work is the last chapter of the book dealing with the great vows of the seven past Buddhas and attained great popularity. It must have been composed earlier than the first century A.D. It was translated by Shrimitra, Dharmagupta, Itsing, and Hiuentsang into Chinese in different times. In Tibetan, there is also more than one rendering of this text. From China, this Sutra travelled to Japan, where in the year

681 on the occasion of the illness of the queen, Emperor Temmai founded the great temple of Bhaishajya-guru, which preserves even now the wonders of the ancient Chinese art. *Ekâdashamukham* is a treatise which contains two Dhâranis. Dhârani means a Riddhimantra, a magical charm to be written on birch bark or palm leaf and put within an amulet and worn on a part of the body to avert evils. There are Mantras also in this text for offering Homa, Bali, Pushpa, Dhupa, Gandha, Deepa, etc. If one repeats the Mantra, the text declares, one can attain a number of merits and get rid of all evils. People can attain Sambodhi by repeating it. This text was translated into Tibetan and Chinese by Yashogupta and Hiuentsang. *Hayagriva-vidyâ is a Dhârani.* The deity invoked is horse-faced. The fourth book of the first volume is called *Sarvatathâgatâdhisthâna-sattâvalokana-Buddha-kshetra-sandarshana-vyuham.* Csoma Korosi translates the title of this book in *Asiatic Researches* (vol. xx, p. 425) thus: 'Description of the province of Buddha on which, for the sake of all beings, all Tathâgatas have bestowed their benedictions.' Its Tibetan rendering was made by Surendrabodhi, Shailendrabodhi, and Jinamitra in the ninth century A.D. with the help of the Tibetan monk Ye-shes-de. Its Chinese translation was done by Itsing in the seventh century. The date of its composition may be placed in the fifth or sixth century A.D. It contains a principal Dhârani, some supplementary Dhâranis, and the account of their efficacy. By reading, writing, or propagating this Dhârani, beings of the present and future will acquire all merits. The name of the donor of the Ms. is given. The donor is Shulivajra, a Dard, at whose instance the Ms. was copied. There is a vast literature of the *Vyâkarana* class in the later Tripitakas, but not in Pali. *Shri-Mahâdevi-vyâkaranam* is a Sutra of that class. The Sutra describes the scene of Sukhâvati where Bhagavân Buddha is seated with the Bodhisattvas only. Then Shri Mahâdevi approaches and pays obeisance. Bhagavân on seeing her refers to her past merits and tells the Bodhisattvas that any one who will utter the *Ashtottarashata-vimalaprakhya-stotram* addressed to Shri Mahâdevi (given in this Sutra) will have only prosperity and no loss, and the goddess will dwell in his house. The Tibetan version of the Sutra gives the name *Sarasvati Shridevi.* *Ajitasena-vyâkaranam* is a Mahayana Sutra, and from the Ms. it appears that it was written by one Arya Sthirabuddhi with the help of Dharmabhanaka Narendra Dutta. The language and style of this Sutra resembles those of *Lalitavistara* of Ashvagosha. It relates an incident or gives a prayer first in easy and correct Sanskrit and then repeats it in broken Sanskrit called Gâthâ dialect by the late savant R. L. Mitra. The Sutra contains an edifying story admonishing people to give alms to the Buddhist monks, develop faith in Buddha as the saviour of mankind and thereby attain Buddhahood in all its glory.

Samâdhirâja-sutra published in the second volume is an important work on Mahayana. It is otherwise known as *Chandra-pradipa-sutra.* The Buddhist Society of Calcutta published as early as 1897 a portion of this text. It was based on a Ms. collected by Hodgson from Nepal. The late Mm. H. P. Shastri also collected a Ms. of this Sutra from Nepal. The Tibetan translation of this Sutra was made by Dharmatashila and Shailendrabodhi who lived in the ninth century A.D. In Chinese there are three translations of this text made by Narendrayasa of the Northern Tshi dynasty in 557 A.D., by Shih-sien-kun of the earlier Sun dynasty in 420-479 A.D., and by Ngan-she-kao of the later Han dynasty in 148 A.D. On scanning the colophon Dr. P. C. Bagchi points out that there was an earlier translation of the text by Ngan-she-kao, which is now lost. The original Sutra was probably written in the first century A.D. Chandra Kirti, the author of *Mâdhyamika-vritti* and Shantideva, author of

Shikshâ-samuchchaya have quoted several extracts from this Sutra in which there is also reference to the three Buddhist synods. Samâdhirâja means that state of mind in which Buddhas and Bodhisattvas realize that all worldly objects, thoughts, or deeds, good or bad, are mere illusion and that the highest truth does not admit of any description, differentiation, or denial. The book harps on the theme that there is no individual (Nara, Pudgala, Jiva, or Sattva), Skandhas are non-existent, all are mere usage, names do not come and go. Almost in every page this idea is expressed, but in such a poetical language that one forgets the monotony of the topic. In the first chapter the Buddha in answer to a question observes that one can perfect himself in Prajnâ by developing even-mindedness alone which means a state of mind that remains unaffected by attachment or hatred. The second chapter is concluded by saying that one who realizes this Samâdhi, which is the highest state of mental condition, becomes a Buddha. We see from this book that Patanjali's conception of Samâdhi is identical with the Mahayanist conception and that Mahayana is a parallel development of Vedanta. The fourth chapter describes a number of preparatory exercises for the attainment of Samâdhi. The three essential exercises are (1) development of a compassionate mind, (2) acquisition of merits, and (3) worship of the Dharmakâya of the Buddha and not the Rupakâya. At the end of the chapter are given some supplementary preparations for Samâdhi such as worship of Buddha with incense, practice of Kshânti (forbearance), acquisition of firm faith in Buddha. The seventh chapter describes the three kinds of Kshânti which are indispensable for perfection in Samâdhi. By the first Kshânti a person avoids quarrels, realizes the illusory nature of things, acquires knowledge of the scriptures comprehending their esoteric and exoteric meanings, and takes the vow to attain the highest knowledge. By the second Kshânti a person becomes steadfast like the mountain, develops concentration of thoughts, and ultimately extends his thoughts beyond all limitations. By the third Kshânti, a person visualizes the Buddhas preaching to beings, comprehends the ways and manners of the Buddhas, and remains unmoved by worldly gain or fame. By the attainment of threefold Kshântis he becomes a Buddha. Buddhahood is here equated with Samâdhi. May we hazard a remark that the Mahayanist conception of Buddhahood is almost the same as the Vedantic conception of Brahmanhood? The ninth chapter called *Gambhira-dharma-kshânti* shows in charming similes that as the phenomenal world has no more existence than mirage, one does not find anything which can be the cause of Râga, Dvesha, or Moha. Chandrakirti has utilized this passage to explain Nagarjuna's *Mâdhyamika Kârikâ* 8 (cf. Chap. V). The verse compares the things of the world to sky, fleeting clouds, sea-foam, bubbles, reflection on a mirror or water, echo, or objects seen in a dream. In the last chapter the Buddha recounts the experiences of one of his previous incarnations when he was born a prince. The prince fell seriously ill and over five hundred physicians could not cure him of his illness. A Bhikshu, who was a reciter of the Dharma, approached him and spoke to him about this Samâdhi. On hearing the talk, the nature of Dharma became clear to him, and the disease at once left him.

The four 'Vastus' published in the third volume have all their Tibetan and Chinese versions. The Tibetan translation was made by Sarvajnadeva and Dharmakara of Kashmir with the assistance of Vidyakaraprabha of Central India and a Tibetan named Lotsava in the ninth century A.D. There are several translations of this Vinaya text in Chinese. Of the eighteen schools of Buddhism that appeared in the pre-Ashokan period five at least had their own Vinaya texts, all of which were translated into Chinese. The Chinese,

unlike the Tibetans, took keen interest in the Vinaya. Both the Chinese travellers Fa-hien and Itsing came to India with the sole purpose of getting correct Vinaya texts and carrying them to their country. Fa-hien, who came to India in the first decade of the fifth century A.D., copied a complete text of *Mahâsanghika Vinaya*, which he found in a Mahayana monastery at Pataliputra. Itsing, who visited India three centuries later, got interested in the *Mulasarvâstivâda Vinaya*. Both were mainly responsible for introducing *Mahâsanghika Vinaya* and *Mulasarvâstivâda Vinaya* into China. The *Dashâdhyâya* of the *Sarvâstivâda Vinaya* was translated in 404 A.D. into Chinese by Punyatara and Kumarajiva. Other principal Vinaya texts existing in Chinese translations are (1) *Sarvâstivâda-vinaya-mâtrikâ* translated by Sanghavarman in 445 A.D., (2) *Sarvâstivâda-vinaya-vibhâsa* translated in 431 A.D., (3) *Dashâdhyâya-vinaya-nidâna* translated by Vimalaksha in 405-418 A.D., (4) *Mahâsanghika-vinaya* translated by Buddhabhadra and Fa-hien in 400-413 A.D., (5) *Dharma-gupta-vinaya* translated by Buddhayashas and Chunfonien in 365 A.D., and (6) *Mahishâsaka-vinaya* translated by Buddhajiva and Chutaoshan in 391-401 A.D.

The *Chivara-vastu*, which is the section of Vinaya on the robes of the monks, consists mainly of stories of Bimbisara, Jivaka, Visakha, and Upananda who brought about the framing of certain rules concerning the dress of monks and nuns. Towards the end of this book certain rules are given regarding the distribution of robes. From the stories of this book it is evident that medical science as well as surgery was fairly well developed in ancient India. In extreme rains and heat, when monks were in trouble due to shortage of cloth, *Kathina-vastu* describes how Buddha allowed the monks to accept cloths *en masse* for members of the Sangha. He prohibits monks from trimming hair, and using bark, deerskin, camel hair, etc. The *Kosâmbârka-vastu* describes some incidents that happened when the Buddha was dwelling in Kosambi as well as the occasion which led to the formation of the ecclesiastic act of suspension or expulsion (Utkshepana) of a defaulting monk. The *Karma-vastu* first enumerates four codes of the Sangha as follows: (1) four monks can form a chapter to perform all ecclesiastical acts except Pravarana, Upasâmpada, and Avarhana, (2) five monks can form a chapter to perform all acts except Upasampada and Avarhana, (3) ten monks can perform all acts except Avarhana, (4) twenty or more monks can perform all acts. This is followed by a list of disciplinary actions to be taken against an offending monk. Buddha lays down the general principle that a particular offence must be met by the particular disciplinary measure prescribed in the code, and any deviation would make the chapter of monks guilty of an offence. The book is concluded with an exposition of an ecclesiastical act performed in concord and in discord. As the texts only are published and not their translations, the above *résumé* of their contents will be interesting and useful to the readers.

NIMBARKACHARYA'S INTERPRETATION OF THE VEDANTA-SUTRAS

BY DEWAN BAHADUR K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

It must not be supposed that such a theistic system as that of Nimbarkacharya was new and without its own line of ancestry in Indian philosophical thought. In the Upanishads themselves we have the seeds of all the later schools and sects and systems of Indian thought. The later world-views and the later ideologies in regard to the nature of the soul, the later visualizations of the nature of Godhead, and the later concepts of salvation and liberation were all there in the germ. The names of the universal God as Vishnu or Shiva or Devi had already come to prominence along with the concept of Brahman, as supplementary to it and as an amplification of it. Though the earliest Upanishads work out the concepts of Akshara, Ânanda, Isha, Antaryâmi, etc., yet in the *Kenopanishad* we come across the concept of Umâ as the revealer of Brahman who appeared in his form as Yaksha before the assembled gods.

Further, the later thinkers who preceded the Sutrakâras and Bhâshyakâras, held diverse views. In the *Vedanta-sutras* themselves there are indications of such pre-existence of monism and qualified monism of various types and dualism of diverse types. Such thinkers as Jaimini, Audulomi, Kâshakritsna, and others pondered deeply over the fundamental problems of life. While Bâdari and Kâshakritsna were distinctly Advaitins, Audulomi and Âsmarathya clung to diverse types of qualified monism and dualism.

It may be that Shri Shankara emphasized the transcendental aspect of reality too much and that this attitude coloured his world-view. Similarly Shri Ramanuja emphasized the immanent aspect overmuch while Shri Madhva emphasized the aspect of God as the Lord of the universe. The *Bhâgavata* gives us a glimpse of this threefold attitude when it says:

'ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्द्यते ।'

But all the three Âcharyas agree in saying that Brahman is the substratum of everything and that the world has only a derivative reality and is really non-independent from Him and that Brahman is immanent and transcendent and is the Infinite Eternal Absolute Bliss. I do not mean to say that there are not basic cleavages and divergences of doctrine amongst them. But the similarities and even identities of doctrine amongst them have not been sufficiently stressed. I have sought elsewhere to indicate in what direction the future, dynamic, synthesized Hinduism will flow. The Gita gives us a clear indication of such a direction.

Nimbarkacharya is one of the outstanding Bhâshyakâras on the *Brahma-sutras* of Vyasa. His Bhâshya is called *Vedânta-pârijâta-saurabha*, i.e., the perfume of the Pârijâta flower of Vedanta. His school of thought is called the Bhedâbheda or Dvaitâdvaita school. Bhaskara, who belonged to the ninth century A.D., and Yadava Prakasha who was the Guru of Shri Ramanuja, also were of the same school. The analogy of the ocean and the wave is pressed into service by the school to express the inter-relations of Jiva (the individual soul) and Brahman (the universal soul). This idea is expressed by Shri Shankara also in his *Shatpadi* poem thus :

सत्यपि भेदापगमे नाथ तवाहं न मामकीनस्त्वं ।
सामुद्रो हि तरंगः क्वचन समुद्रो न तारंगः ॥

But he holds that such a difference is not basic and absolute but only

relative. But Nimbarka thinks that both the aspects, viz, being part of the Universal Soul and being essentially one with It; could be simultaneously predicated about the Jiva. The mind under the stress of desire objectifies itself and becomes the focus of egoistic individual consciousness. But when it is calm and tranquil it realizes the Infinite; and then the egoistic individual consciousness is merged in the Infinite Universal Consciousness. Thus Jiva and Brahman are one in kind but different in degree. The Jiva is atomic (Anu) in its nature and is not all-pervasive (Vibhu). It is eternal and is consciousness in its nature. It is separate from Brahman in its phenomenal aspect and one with Brahman in its noumenal aspect without losing its separateness. In the same way Nimbarka holds that the universe is an aspect or effect (Parinâma) of Brahman, as the effect is always only in the cause in another form. The Absolute is God in relation to the Jiva and the universe; these being but aspects of Shakti. The universe is but a finitization and limitation of the Infinite. It is non-separate (Ananya) from Brahman. Brahman is its material cause (Upâdânakârana) as well as its efficient cause (Nimittakârana). But Brahman is not exhausted by the universe and He transcends the universe besides pervading it. Just as a spider spins its cobweb out of itself but is itself all the time, even so does the universe emanate from God.

The Jiva realizes its essential nature and attains emancipation by Jnâna and Bhakti. In Mukti or liberation, the soul is separate from Brahman, but yet it feels itself to be one with Brahman. It is the Lord's servant (Dâsa); but it has the same bliss as the Lord. The soul ceases to regard itself as being apart from Brahman and realizes itself as being a part of Brahman. It is eternal and free from the round of births and deaths (Samsâra) but has no part in the creation, preservation, and destruction of the world.

Thus Jagat is perceived by the desireful mind as being separate from God. The desireless mind will regard itself as a part of God and realize the world as non-separate from God. This will happen only in the Turiya (fourth) state of Samâdhi, which is above and beyond the ordinary three states, viz, Jâgrat (the waking), Svapna (the state of dream), and Sushupti (the state of dreamless sleep). The multiplicity of the things of the phenomenal universe is resolved into the unity of the noumenon in the state of liberation (Mukti). In Mukti the soul becomes omniscient and has infinite bliss, but realizes itself only as a part of Brahman. Thus in liberation there is no extinction of individuality but only its infinitization.

Brahman is both Saguna (with attributes) and Nirguna (without attributes). It is beyond speech and thought and can be apprehended, but cannot be comprehended, by our mind (Achintya). Brahman viewed in relation to the world is Ishvara. The Absolute of philosophy is in no wise separate or different from the God of religion.

The first Adhyâya of the *Brahmasutras* is known as the Adhyâya of Samanvaya (synthesis). It shows how the different words used in the Shruti refer to Brahman. Pâda I of Adhyâya I discusses the nature of Brahman. Brahman is the cause of the universe and is known only through Shâstra (scripture). The universe is created by God's will (Sankalpa) and not only by the inert blind force of Prakriti. Brahman is bliss and is the innermost soul of all. The Shruti describes Brahman by such terms as Âkâsha, Prâna, Jyotih, etc. Thus the first Pâda is the seed of the tree of Brahmavidyâ. It deals briefly with God and soul and world and their inter-relations.

Pâda II of Adhyâya I pursues the task of Pâda I. It takes up various terms used in the Shruti and shows that they refer to Brahman. Brahman is perfection, light, life, all-devourer, the indwelling spirit in the eye, the

immanent power (Antaryâmi), the invisible, the omnipresent, the subtle, the formless, the Vaishvânara, etc.

Pâda III of Adhyâya I pursues the same discussion further. Brahman is the abode of all, the infinite (Bhoomâ), the indweller, the dweller in the heart, the spirit of the size of the thumb (Angushthamâtra Purusha).

Pâda IV of Adhyâya I examines other Shruti texts and shows that the inanimate Pradhâna cannot be the cause of the universe. The Shakti of God is a mode of God and is not inanimate and independent like the Pradhâna or Prakriti or Avyakta of the Samkhya system. Mahat in the Vedanta is the Universal Ego or Hiranyagarbha and not the Samkhya category of Mahat which is inanimate. The words Asat, Kartâ, Âtmâ, etc., as used in the Shruti texts refer to Brahman. Brahman is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. 'तदात्मानं स्वयमकुरुत' (*Taittiriya Upanishad*, II. 7. 1): the world has no separate existence apart from Brahman. It is its apparent separate existence that is an illusion; but it is not an illusion itself as it is only a mode of Brahman.

After thus establishing that the inanimate independent Prakriti of the Samkhya system is not the cause of the universe and that Brahman is the cause of the universe, Adhyâya II refutes the theories of the schools of thought other than the Vedanta system. It is called the Avirodha Adhyâya. Pâda I of Adhyâya II discusses and refutes the Yoga system, etc. Brahman and Jiva are like the ocean and the waves or the sun and its rays. Brahman includes and transcends soul and universe. Brahman creates the universe as the spider weaves its web out of itself and is yet in and beyond the web. Brahman does not need any organs or instruments for creating the universe. Brahman creates the world as a Leelâ or sport and not out of any motive or purpose. Diversity of enjoyment is due to Karma and there is no partiality or cruelty in God.

Pâda II of Adhyâya II refutes the Samkhya and Vaisheshika systems, the various schools of Buddhism, the Jaina schools, the Pâshupata school, etc.

Pâda III of Adhyâya II deals with the order of evolution and involution and the characteristics of the individual soul. The soul is atomic (Anu) and not infinite and all-pervading (Vibhu). If it is Vibhu, it cannot enter or leave bodies. Further, if the souls are infinite there will be intermixture of their Karma and hence confusion in the rewards of Karma. Though it is Anu, its power of sensation relates to the entire body, just as the perfume of a flower or the light of a lamp spreads beyond its locus. The soul and Buddhi are the agent in Karma; but they are governed by the universal soul. The universal soul is in no way affected by the joys and griefs of the individual souls, just as the sun is not affected by its rays falling on the impurities of the earth.

Pâda IV of Adhyâya II discusses the evolution of the senses, the Prâna, etc., from Brahman. They have their presiding deities who are subordinate to God. All material bodies are the result of the commingling of the five elements.

Adhyâya III is called the Sâdhanâ Adhyâya and deals with Sâdhanâs (means of liberation). Pâda I of Adhyâya III refers to the transmigration of the soul. The soul along with the subtle essences of the elements, the senses, the Prânas, the mind, and the Buddhi (forming the Lingasharira) leaves the body. Evil-doers go to hell or take birth in the earth. Sacrifices etc., lead by the Pitriyâna to the Pitriloka. Devotion leads by the Devayâna to the Brahmaloka. The return journey from the Pitriloka is described, but there is no return from the Brahmaloka.

Pâda II of Adhyâya III discusses the states of dream and sleep and swoon, the immanent and transcendent aspects of Brahman, and the relation

of Brahman to the individual souls and the universe. Brahman is one with the universe and yet separate from it. He is in the universe and the universe is from Him, and yet He is beyond it.

Pâda III of Adhyâya III describes the various Vidyâs (meditations) prescribed in the Shruti. These differ in form but all of them lead to beatitude. We can meditate on Brahman directly or through some symbol (Pratika) such as the sun, Âkâsha, mind, Prâna, Pranava, the space in the heart, the spirit in the eye, etc. We must meditate on His infinite auspicious attributes (omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, infinite bliss, etc.). The worshipper should concentrate on His oneness with Brahman.

Pâda IV of Adhyâya III teaches that Brahmavidyâ leads to Mukti and that works are of value as cleansing the mind; they do not directly lead to salvation. The seekers of salvation may go by the Jnânamârga but should not give up the obligatory duties (Nityakarma).

The fourth Adhyâya deals with Phala or fruit, i.e., liberation. Pâda I treats of incessant meditation, the conception of Brahman as the self of the meditator, the value of Pratikas (symbols), and the traits of the man of realization.

Pâda II of Adhyâya IV describes the mode of departure of the soul from the body.

Pâda III of Adhyâya IV describes the journey of the liberated soul towards Brahman by the Devayâna (Archirâdimârga). It describes Kramamukti, Jivanmukti, and Videhamukti.

Pâda IV of Adhyâya IV describes the experience of Mukti. The liberated soul may function in a body or, may be, bodies. It has all the powers of Brahman except Jagadvyâpâratâ, the creation and preservation and dissolution of the universe.

MY EVENINGS WITH THE SWAMI

CALCUTTA,
5 January 1899.

Dear Miss M.,

Swami is looking splendid but is not strong enough yet to come and see me.

The Albert Hall is taken for me for Saturday Feb. 4th. Subject 'Kâli and the Kali worship'. I am going to write out what I have to say and take it to Swami, who will then help me with the solid parts. All I dare pray is that I shall not fail completely to put Kali worship sympathetically before educated Calcutta.

Swami is always asking when we are to have the tea-party which I promised, and which I hope will happen next Monday. He is to stay in Calcutta till April, the doctors say, and then go to Europe. But what an atmosphere of work and energy he has brought with him.

If I had more time, I should want to tell you about my expeditions to the Math and the dear little tea-table in Swami's room, at which I drink tea after my lessons. My lessons are: Wednesday, Botany and Drawing; Friday, Physiology and Sewing.

To-day a new Brahmacharin applied for admission to the Order and was sent on to Belur with a warning about severe discipline.

Did I tell you that I have a class of Christian missionaries? There is a Christian mission (American) school under a lady, on whom I was asked to call. I loved her because she has that lovely American something about her, and she asked me to help them a little in history teaching, on Thursday evenings. So I went last night, and talked for an hour instead of half-an-hour, and she said it was not at all too long.

For Monday's tea-party I must have the tea-set transferred here, and we shall have tea outside in the yard, or, if the pigeons would keep away, on the school verandah, so I shall hurry and get the cushions made.

Yours,
—M. (SISTER NIVEDITA)

THE AGAMASHASTRA OF GAUDAPADA*

By Jatindra Nath Banerjee, M.A.

The author has dedicated the book to 'Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore,' the immortal poet of Bengal, with a Sanskrit Shloka transliterated in English characters. Then come the preface (19 pages), introduction (108 pages), the text of the *Âgamashâstra* (219 pages), appendices (70 pages), and addenda-et-corrigenda (180 pages). There is unmistakable evidence in the book to show that it is the outcome of long and laborious research into the domain of existing literature on the important subject with which it deals, namely, the Advaita Vedanta philosophy. We have, therefore, gone through the book with the care and attention it demands, and we wish we could congratulate the learned author on his bringing out this book, giving his own interpretation of the text of the *Âgamashâstra*, perhaps with the object of adding to the stock of knowledge on the subject and removing all misapprehension. But the principal difficulty in our way is that the book has been written in English and even the Sanskrit Shlokas have been printed in Roman characters; this, we are afraid, will make it extremely difficult, if not wholly impossible, for many of our countrymen, however well versed they may be in Sanskrit lore, to read the Shlokas correctly, as the Roman characters are wholly unsuitable for writing the Sanskrit language in. The English language, we fear, will detract greatly from the value of the book and will make it useless to by far the largest majority of Sanskrit scholars of the country who constitute the repository of all knowledge of the scriptures but to whom English is an unknown language. Is it then only for the enlightenment of the few English-knowing Sanskrit scholars, who form but a small minority of our Sanskrit scholars, and of the young students of the university, who are being trained up on modern lines, that the author has written this book?

Before dealing further with the book, we think, it is necessary to say a few words about the *Âgamashâstra* of Gaudapada. As is well known, the *Âgamashâstra* of Gaudapada belongs to the Vedanta school of philosophy and, according to that school, its place is only next to that of the Upanishads. Indeed it is regarded as the highest authority next to the Upanishads and as one of the four corner-stones of the ground edifice of Advaita Vedanta, namely, (1) the Upanishads, (2) the works of Brahmarshi Vashishtha, (3) the works of Vedavyasa and (4) the works of Gaudapada. It is superfluous to say that the latter three are completely in accordance with the first—the Upanishads. Gaudapada is esteemed by Shankaracharya as 'Pujyâbhipujya Paramaguru, that is, as the preceptor of preceptors, the most venerable of the venerable preceptors'. For support of his views on very intricate points Shankaracharya in his *Brahmasutra Bhâshya* has quoted more than once from Gaudapada as 'a Sampradâyavid Âchârya, that is, as a professor conversant with the teachings of this particular Advaita school,' as he was the direct disciple of Shukadeva, the son of Vedavyasa. The greatest work of Gaudapada is the *Mândukya-upanishad-kârikâ*, popularly known as the *Âgamashâstra* of Gaudapada. In order to establish that the Advaita Vedanta is based on a substratum of truth which is unassailable,

* *The Âgamashâstra of Gaudapada*, edited, translated, and annotated by M. M. Vidhushekhara Shastri, Ashutosh Professor of Sanskrit, University of Calcutta. Published by the University of Calcutta. Pp. 435. Price not mentioned.

and to promulgate that truth, Shankaracharya has written commentaries on the three sections of the Vedanta known as the Prasthânatraya, that is, twelve Upanishads, some works of Vedavyasa, such as the *Brahmasutras*, the *Bhagavadgitâ*, *Sanatsujâtiya*, *Vishnu Sahasranâma*, and the *Âgamashâstra* of Gaudapada. In his other invaluable works also, such as the exposition of the *Nrisimha Uttaratâpaniya Upanishad*, *Uttaragitâ*, etc., Gaudapada has based his conclusions solely on the Upanishads. Thus Gaudapada was a Vedantist to the core of his heart and his *Âgamashâstra* is unquestionably an authoritative work on the Advaita Vedanta philosophy, and it is a grievous mistake to say, as our learned author does, that it is based merely on traditional doctrines. Not only this, but the learned author also attempts to prove in his own skilful way that this *Âgamashâstra* of Gaudapada is mostly borrowed from and influenced by the Buddhist philosophy. To arrive at this conclusion, he attempts to show that he has considered the question of indebtedness of the one to the other from the standpoints of both the orthodox and heterodox schools—from the angles of vision of both the Westernized and ancient oriental scholars—with an unprejudiced mind. Indeed he has reassessed the whole of the literature which has a bearing on the question, and his collection of information is exhaustive and highly commendable. Through his ardent labour we come to know many things relating to Buddhism and its literature which were hitherto unknown to many like us. But still we are not convinced that the conclusion he has arrived at will be found acceptable by all. We are afraid it will only create controversy when there was none. In our humble opinion, the learned author would have done a great good service to the country if he had directed his undoubted talent and ability to finding out how much the Buddhist philosophy is indebted to the more ancient Hindu philosophy, how much the savants of the Buddhist school owe their inspiration to the ancient Hindu sages and saints. In compiling and editing the book, the author seems to have not only followed in the footsteps of the Western savants of archæology and antiquity but has surpassed them on many points. Had Macaulay now been in the land of the living, he would certainly have been delighted to see in this book that the fruit which his educational scheme for this country has borne, is far in excess of his own expectation; for in the words of the late Mr. Justice Woodroffe of the Calcutta High Court, only our physique is Indian but the brain is European. The enterprise of our learned author furnishes an incontrovertible evidence of the truth of the great judge's remark.

One cannot but admire the spirit of self-abnegation and humility which the learned author displays in the preface of the book by saying, 'it would be sheer foolishness on my part, I am perfectly conscious, if I pretend to claim by writing the following pages any superiority to the commentator' (Shankaracharya). But it is passing strange that in the same breath he accuses Shankaracharya of having twisted the text of the *Âgamashâstra* to suit his own explanation and rejects the text accepted and explained by that great sage, though it has successfully stood the test of scrutiny for more than a thousand years. Shankaracharya was a man of superhuman intellectual powers. He is said to have finished writing his commentaries when still a young man. It was he who saved the eternal Vedic religion from the onslaughts of Buddhism. To accuse him of having twisted the text of any work to suit his own explanation can only be characterized as a bold assertion. If this is not claiming superiority to Shankaracharya, we have yet to learn what it is. But we forget. In giving his own interpretation to the text of an ancient work, it is certainly necessary for the present author to do the needful to

support that interpretation; and it is evidently for this purpose that our author has thought fit to find fault with the work of Shankaracharya.

We again admire the humility which the author displays by leaving it to his readers to form their own judgement as to how much Gaudapada is influenced by Buddhist thoughts and how much of them he has adopted in his own system of Vedanta, although he is himself absolutely free from all doubts on that point. But let us see the logic he relies upon. His logic is that the similarity of thoughts, expressions, and sometimes even of the language with those of the Buddhists, suggests that Gaudapada is later than many Buddhist writers of the third or the fourth century A.D. and so Gaudapada's indebtedness to the Buddhists is a fact which none can deny. But if similarity of thought can prove the indebtedness of the one to the other, what is there to prevent one from thinking and saying that the Buddhist philosophy is later than Vedanta, is borrowed largely from Vedanta, and is indebted to Vedanta? To prevent the possibility of any such argument being put forward, our learned author proceeds to determine the date of Gaudapada and says that as Gaudapada is not mentioned by any Buddhist writer of an earlier age, he must be assumed to have flourished after them in the fifth century A.D. But can any negative prove the positive which is not diametrically opposite to it? Can the non-mention of Gaudapada in any earlier work prove his posteriority? Indeed such a theory cannot but be dismissed as absurd. Is there any scholar who can assert that he has seen all the literatures of the past? Are these all extant and available? Clearly, therefore, non-mention cannot prove anything with certainty. On the other hand, the Vedic literatures declare in the clearest possible language that Gaudapada was the disciple of Shukadeva, son of Vedavyasa who flourished at the end of the Dwâpara and at the beginning of the Kaliyuga which is generally believed by Hindu Pandits to be now more than five thousand years old. The author need not rely upon what he calls mere legendary tradition, but regarding the time of Gaudapada, reference may be made to about a dozen of the Purânas in which it is said that Shukadeva had a son named Gaura who is called Gaudapada according to the tradition prevalent among the Advaita Vedanta Sannyâsins. Besides, the *Prakritârthatikâ* on the Shankarabhâshya of *Brahmasutra*, which was written about a thousand years ago, also proclaims Gaudapada as the disciple of Shukadeva and the Bhâshya on *Shvetâshvatara Upanishad* also says the same thing. Lastly, we may mention the name of Balakrishna Sarasvati of the seventeenth century who distinctly asserts that Gaudapada existed in the beginning of the Kaliyuga and was the disciple of Shukadeva—a fact which is generally forgotten by men for its antiquity. It is difficult to imagine that these facts are unknown to our learned author who has taken great pains to ascertain the time of Gaudapada, but what has led him to consider these as unbelievable and unworthy of consideration passes our comprehension.

The mention of the word 'Buddha' (*G. Agama.*, 4. 99 Shloka) and such other things does not conclusively prove the posteriority of Gaudapada to Gautama Buddha. According to the Buddhists as well as the Vaidikas many Buddhas came and passed into Nirvana since the first emergence of Buddhism. There was a Buddha in the time of Vedavyasa who has been probably referred to in the *Kârikâ* mentioned above. Hence to conclude that Gaudapada was posterior to Gautama Buddha is nothing but a speculation without any foundation. Thus the conclusion is irresistible that the logic of our learned author is neither sound nor convincing and, perhaps, it will not be far wrong to characterize it as mere sophistry.

Let us now consider if the charge of having borrowed thoughts and ideas

from the Buddhist writers and having been influenced by their writings can at all be correctly laid at the door of any author of any treatise on Vedanta. As every reader of history knows, the Buddhists were looked down upon by the Brahmins and the writings of Udayanacharya, perhaps the greatest Naiyayika ever produced by India, leave no room for doubt on this point. Dharma Kirti, one of the greatest Buddhist logicians of unique merit, was deprecated by Udayana in a very defamatory language. It is the Brahmins, and perhaps the Brahmins only, who greatly enriched it and propagated Buddhist thoughts after embracing Buddhism, but no Buddhist ever served the Brahminic religion in that way. So it is more than evident that the Buddhists borrowed from the Brahminic religion ; but the followers of the Brahminic religion neither borrowed from nor were influenced by the Buddhist religion. If we analyse Buddhist philosophy, we find that it is nothing more than an admixture of the Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, and Vedanta which were already existing. As is well known, Gautâma Buddha was born in a Kshatriya family and was trained in Vedic thoughts. While practising the art of Yoga under the instructions of Vedic Âchâryas like Arar Kalam, Gautama revolted against his Guru's and, assuming the name of Buddha and Bhagavân which is synonymous with Brahman of the Upanishads, started the Buddhistic religion—and yet it is regarded as an original religion. Gautama Buddha himself was not very antagonistic to the Vedic religion but the converts to his religion and their followers and disciples began to throw mud at the religion of their forefathers for reasons known to themselves alone. That is the way with all who change the religion in which they were born as we see even in these days. It is only under the influence of the present careless system of education that we have learnt to admire the Buddhist religion which was driven out of India by our ancestors and to condemn our own religion as leading only to degeneration, in other words, to a state more than total destruction. It is, therefore, deeply to be regretted that a Brahmin who is reputed to be a Pandit engaged in the sacred work of imparting education to young men in whom all the future hope of the Hindu race lies, has come forward to say that the Vedanta philosophy is a thing borrowed from the Buddhists in total disregard of all evidence to the contrary Consideration of space forbids our dealing further with the book, and we must, therefore, conclude here; but before doing so we must congratulate the author for placing before the public all that can be said as to the indebtedness of the Vedanta philosophy to the Buddhist philosophy which requires refutation.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

The Editor makes bold to differ from the accepted theory that the progress of religion lies in conversion, and asserts that the best way of ensuring spiritual advancement is to *Stop Conversion* . . . Swami Saradanandaji's scientific study of Shri Ramakrishna's life reveals the fact that it fulfils *The Need of the Age*. . . . Mr. U. C. Bhattacharya, Curator of the Rajputana Museum, makes an original contribution to the interpretation of the *Sculpture Representing 'Mother and Child'*. . . . Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri makes a brief, comparative study of Nimbarkacharya's philosophy. . . . Was Gaudapada indebted to Nagarjuna?—is a complicated question. Mr. J. N. Banerjee throws much light on it.

UNTOUCHABILITY

In a short but enlightening article in the last number of *The Hindusthan Review* on 'Nambudiris', a community of orthodox brahmins belonging to Malabar, Mr. T. S. Paducone observes:

These people are strict vegetarians and they are well known for their orthodox views of religion. They consider themselves polluted by the touch of all castes below them and by the approach of all lower than the Nayars. A member of the depressed classes uncovers himself to the waist at the sight of a Nambudiri, and shouts out in warning that he is an untouchable. The brahmin likewise exclaims 'Ho'. An untouchable is expected to move to a safe distance and let the Nambudiri pass.

The curse of untouchability which is prevalent in a virulent form even to-day in some sections of Hindu society, as is evident from the above, is undoubtedly one of the main obstacles that stand in the way of our national regeneration. Hinduism never identified spirituality with caste which is purely a social institution and which has its own purpose to serve. To class a large section of our fellow men belonging to the lower castes as 'untouchables' on the ground that they are culturally far below the higher castes, and to treat them as worse than animals is nothing short of gross injustice and oppressive tyranny. It is all the more deplorable that such an iniquitous custom should be prevailing among the learned and cultured sections of the higher castes who are usually the custodians of wealth and power. Swami Vivekananda expressed himself vehemently against untouchability and repeatedly called upon the higher castes to be more sympathetic and tolerant towards their poor and less fortunate countrymen. The Swami, in one of his lectures at Madras, said:

Was there ever a sillier thing before in the world than what I saw in Malabar country? The poor pariah is not allowed to pass through the same street as the high-caste man, but if he changes his name to a hodge-podge English name, it is all right; or to a Muhammedan name, it is all right. What inference would you draw except that these Malabaris are all lunatics, their homes so many lunatic asylums, and that they are to be treated with derision by every race in India until they mend their manners and know better. Shame upon them that such wicked and diabolical customs are allowed.

'Untouchability' has no religious or scriptural sanction whatever, and can have no place in the resurgent Hindu society traditionally known for its ideals of love, toleration, and the divinity of man. To quote Swami Vivekananda again,

See that you do not lose your lives in this dire irreligion of 'Don't-touchism'. Must the teaching 'Looking upon all beings as your own self' be confined to books alone? How will they grant salvation who cannot feed a hungry mouth with a crumb of bread? How will those who become impure at the mere breath of others purify others?

The sad spectacle that we see even to-day of large numbers of the lower caste people leaving the Hindu fold to join the ranks of the Christian and Muhammedan communities is a direct result of this social repression. Untouchability is gradually disappearing from its very haunts. In Travancore State temples were thrown open to all sections of Hindus, though the vested interests were much perturbed over it. But it is a pity, as the writer observes in conclusion, that untouchability, in a crude form, should still persist among the Nambudiri brahmins who are renowned for their Sanskrit learning and whose community produced the great Shankaracharya.

HINDUISM AND SOCIAL SERVICE

In his Convocation Address to the Annamalai University, Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetti made some observations regarding the necessity for voluntary social service in the reconstruction of our society on a sound basis. We take the relevant portion as it has appeared in *The Hindu*:

The speaker pointed out how voluntary social service by individuals can supplement and facilitate in their own way, the larger schemes for social security and human happiness now on the anvil. In his own experience he had come across the silent and unostentatious work done by Christian missionaries and nuns in remote and unheard of villages and hamlets; and he had

often asked himself the question 'Why is it that in spite of all its great philosophy the Hindu religion has not kindled this spirit in the hearts of its votaries?' The missionary spirit of social service seemed to be alien to their temperament and upbringing. Was it because Hinduism was not a proselytizing religion and they needed the zeal of the preacher to feel the call for service? Somehow this explanation did not satisfy him.

A tree is known by its fruit. If Hindus are not imbued with the missionary spirit of social service then Hindu religion is to blame for not having kindled this spirit. So also if Christian nations have been fighting one another for pelf and power, and oppressing weaker nations in violation of the principles of truth, love, and charity, their religion is responsible. But the failure of the Hindu to live up to the ideals of his religion can no more be attributed to Hinduism than the failure of the Christian to walk in the path of God be attributed to Christianity. To the Hindu, religion is realization of Truth, and social service is but the means to reach the ideal. In Hinduism service rendered towards the removal of physical wants or fetching of material comforts is not looked upon as the highest type of service to man. Hindu philosophy has placed before man the highest ideal of service, covering all mankind, irrespective of race, colour, or creed. The path of Karma Yoga as taught in the Bhagavadgita enables us to work for the good of society as well as self-purification through non-attachment and self-abnegation. Moreover, the rational basis of all ethics is founded on the Vedanta philosophy. 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' is not simply a moral code. Hindu philosophers tell us that the same divinity pervades all beings and that by loving or hating another we love or hate ourselves. Christian missions have been doing good work in India. But they are not unoften inspired by motives other than purely humanitarian. It is said that religion makes men indifferent to the sufferings of humanity. But the urge to unselfish service comes only when the true religious spirit dawns in the life of a man. In ancient India religious life aimed at preparing every individual for negation of his little self in the interests of the family, the community, and the country. If Hindus practise, in the right spirit, what their religion teaches, our society need have no dearth of sincere workers possessing the proper attitude to service.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE JOURNAL OF THE GANGANATH JHA RESEARCH INSTITUTE. BOARD OF EDITORS—PROF. R. D. RANADE, DR. A. SIDDIQU, MM. DR. UMESH MISHRA. *Allahabad. Pp. 143.*

THE BHARATI. EDITORS—BALASHASTRI HARDAS, PROF. D. K. GARDE. *Published by Bharatiya Sanskriti Vidyapeetha, Nagpur. Pp. 44. Annual subscription Rs. 4.*

U. S. A. *Published by the Government of the United States of America. Pp. 64. Price 3 annas per copy.*

We heartily welcome all these three magazines and wish them every success.

The Journal of the G.J.R.I. is devoted mainly to research in Sanskrit and Persian. We have every hope that this quarterly journal will keep bright the tradition created by the illustrious scholar whose memory it perpetuates. The first issue amply justifies our expectation. The first article *Kalpa or the World-cycle* by Dr. R. Shama Sastry arrives at the conclusion that 'a Kalpa in its origin meant an eclipse-cycle of nearly 19 years and not a period of 1,000 divine Yugas of 4,32,000 years'. Dr. S. K. Belvalkar in his article *A Fake (?) Bhagavadgita Ms.*, examines the claim of the newly discovered Gitas with 745 stanzas to be recognized as more genuine than the one with 700 stanzas commented on by Shankara and others. The eminent scholar finds no substantial reason for not condemning the former as spurious. There are also other scholarly articles by Dr. S. N. Sen, Prof. M. Hiriyanna, Dr. S. K. De, Dr. B.

Bhattacharyya, Captain S. M. Zamin Ali, Dr. S. M. Katre, and others.

The Bharati is also devoted mainly to research and interpretation of the ancient culture from the Hindu point of view. When Western scholarship tries to ride roughshod over the traditions and beliefs of the Hindus and wants to reconstruct Indian history in its own way, a journal of the type of *The Bharati* is by no means superfluous.

The *U. S. A.* condenses articles on various subjects from the magazines of the United States of America, and aims at giving a true picture of that country's war efforts. The magazine is profusely illustrated. It is calculated to promote good understanding between India and America. We wish, how ever, that it included some articles on cultural subjects, so that India could understand the inner life of America as well.

CRISIS OF THE MODERN WORLD. By RENE GUENON. *Published by Luzac & Co., 46, Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1. Pp. 170. Price : paper Rs. 3-8 ; cloth Rs. 6.*

René Guénon is a *liaison* officer between the East and the West, between the traditional culture of the hoary past and the modern civilization, between the universal metaphysics and materialism that has *de facto* overthrown intellectuality and banished spirituality. This *liaison* officer may very reasonably be counted as one of the few who, in his own language, are a 'prolongation of the Eastern elects'. His recent book *The Crisis of the Modern World* presents a very thought-provoking and serious review of the modern crisis. This splendid diagnosis of the modern chaos by this philosophical bi-linguist, equally versed in Eastern lore and Western philosophy, naturally commands a serious and thorough study by all who are in the least interested in the welfare of the worried world.

The modern world is in the throes of a crisis, and even some go so far as to be haunted by the idea of the 'end of the world'. Such reflections and anticipations are not too surprising if attention is riveted keenly on the real nature of the present world. It is the 'Dark Age'—Kaliyuga—in which we are living. The disequilibrium is too 'profane' to be overlooked. Europe, according to Guénon, has diverged from its traditional path since the thirteenth century, which marks the beginning of the 'disruption of Christendom', of the decadence of the modern civilization. And the 'Renaissance' *ipso facto* was 'not a rebirth but the death of many things'.

Thereafter there is only 'profane' philosophy and 'profane' science ; religion has disintegrated into verbal moralism—'modern man, instead of attempting to raise himself to truth, claims to drag truth down to his own level,' ; philosophy is building its edifice on quibbles and ill-framed propositions ; reality is identified with nothing but sensible things ; science is limited to things that can be measured, counted, and weighed ; scientific research has lost its purity—disinterestedness ; intellectual ambition has been limited to inventing and constructing machines ; industry has become the justification of science ! Man has become 'a tool for making tools' ; utilitarianism has become the main motive power or the only spring of action ; history has become superfluous ; instead of the feudal system, democracy is introduced, which prefers quantity to quality, the masses to the elect ; commercial relations far from drawing peoples closer together and bringing about an understanding have become the source of struggles and conflicts ; the economic field is that of rival interests. Materialistic outlook on life, observes the writer, has thus exteriorized itself in every field of our action, calling it 'progress—deformed to the point of caricature' ! These are, surely, descriptions of an utter confusion and crisis ; and as a result of these the whole of the human world is embroiled in a war, the inhumanity of which is unknown to human history.

It is a hopeful sign, as noticed by the author, that some of us who are inclined to contemplation are fed up with this sort of things and are sure that these evils are but the repercussions of our own materialistic civilization, our disregard for tradition, and last but not the least our lack of principle—a higher principle which should always guide our actions. The author assures that it is not too late even now to go back to tradition whereby the Western civilization could be saved from complete dissolution. It is essential here to remark that by modern civilization he means that sort of civilization which is advocated in the West in our time and which is also followed by those of the East who are influenced by the ideas that are Western, and by dissolution he means the complete end of this civilization either accidentally or in a cataclysm. He invites an 'attempt to restore something comparable to what existed in the Middle Ages, with the differences demanded by modifications in the circumstances'. Secondly, he calls for a 'Defence of West' against *itself* and *its own* perversities, tendencies and confused activities, that will lead inevitably to ruin and destruction. It is highly satisfying to note that the author has just understood the Indian standpoint which impels him to write: '. . . East (India specially)

has no thought of attacking or dominating anybody and asks no more than to be left in independence and tranquillity—a not unreasonable demand, one must admit.' The author looks forward to the East as the repository of all the good and noble of the past. He believes that the traditional civilization still exists in the East, and the East can by virtue of its noble features alleviate the Western malady. Thirdly, he warns us against feverish commotion and craving for speed in which we are living. He appeals for a more contemplative life without which everything will turn monstrous as it is to-day. Fourthly, science should be disinterested. It should not be a mere means to the satisfaction of the ends acclaimed by pragmatism. Fifthly, 'individualism, inasmuch as it implies the negation of intellectual intuition which is essentially a super-individual faculty,' should be discarded. Sixthly, philosophy should not be identified with rationalism and religion must be strictly differentiated from verbal moralism. Religion should cease to be a theory and should be treated as a practical science. Finally, in the social order he pleads for the 'really intellectual elects' instead of democracy, and restoration of intellectuality instead of narrow utilitarianism. And above all, our whole outlook on life should be changed. Materialism should be thrown off. Spirituality needs a focus. Spirituality and intellectuality are the very watchwords of Guénon's philosophy.

Materialism cannot restore peace and happiness—it can cause struggle and conflict only. He is a believer in hope, love, and charity—an advocate of truth, God, and spirituality and the higher values of life. The Western civilization can escape from the fast approaching collapse only by 'realizing Catholicism in the true sense of the word.' He affirms that the West can only achieve these remedies if it knocks at the door of the East whence will come the flood of light that will dispel the present gloom of the West. 'The Orientals,' he says, 'are not a menace to the West in any way whatsoever,' contrarily, they are the savants, of humanity, civilization and culture. Their adherence to intellectuality, devotion to Truth and affinity with tradition bespeak their brightest features that should guide the West at this hour of crisis.

SANSKRIT—ENGLISH

NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS. By Swami Tyagishananda. *Published by Shri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 251. Price Rs. 2-8.*

The aphorisms of Narada on the philosophy of Bhakti are too well known to need any introduction. Here is an excellent translation into English of these Sutras, with word-for-word meaning, and elaborate notes. The text is given in the original, divided into five sections under different headings. The word-for-word meaning and English rendering follow the text in each section. Copious notes, covering over two hundred pages of the book, prefaced by a lucid introduction, form the special feature of this work. It is not all uncritical appreciation and elucidation of the textual standpoint, but a thorough and thoughtful study of the sublime path of divine love. The much misunderstood relation between Shri Krishna and the Gopies has been helpfully discussed and explained in its true light. Suitable quotations from a large number of original works on Bhakti and kindred works of other religions are inserted wherever necessary. We gladly welcome this practical contribution to Bhakti literature and commend it to all those devoted to the spiritual life.

THE BHAGAVADGITA. *Published by Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 370. Price 4 As. (Board 6 As.).*

We welcome this pocket edition of the Bhagavadgita with Sanskrit text and English rendering in popular style. It also contains an introduction and textual synopsis as also an article bearing on the subject matter, all by Jayadayal Goyandka.

HINDI

GITA PRABANDH (Essays on the Gita). Part I. By Sri Aurobindo. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Grantha Mala, 16, Rue Debassin De Richement, Pondicherry. Pp. 402. Price Rs. 4.*

There is in philosophy no more neat and superb exposition of human life than the Gita. It is a clarion call to the suffering humanity for action in the midst of worldly confusion. Lord Shri Krishna's message to Arjuna is a multitude of celestial flames that never go out. They shed an eternal light of wisdom and hold out a fervent hope to the world which has lost its track in the labyrinths of sectarianism.

The Gita has been a favourite theme for the thinkers of the East and the West. Sri Aurobindo's interpretation of the Gita is more rational than those of most of the other modern thinkers, for he has analysed the Gita most psychologically from the view-point of its practicability to the drama of human life.

The present volume is a Hindi translation of the first part of Sri Aurobindo's *Essays on the Gita* first written in the *Arya* and subsequently brought forth in the form of a book. It is divided into twenty-four

chapters dealing with every important aspect of the Gita and presents a most practical solution to the problems of human life. The best part of the book lies in its direct approach to Truth by means of illustrations culled from the Gita itself. It is thus an intensive study of life, which throws open the door of happiness through action.

I am confident, every student of the Gita will find the exposition of Sri Aurobindo most intelligent and practical to his life and circumstances. The Hindi translation has kept up the dignity of the original writing, and it is a volume welcome to the readers of our mother tongue.

R. K. VARMA

NEWS AND REPORTS

SOME NEW ACTIVITIES OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

In spite of great hardship and struggle through which the Mission is passing during this war it has on its record the addition of some important branches of its activities besides expansion of the existing ones in various directions. Below is given a brief account of its newly started works during the last few years.

The Ramakrishna Mission Shri Sarada Vidyalaya, Madras

The Ramakrishna Mission Shri Sarada Vidyalaya, Madras, was started in 1939 with the following objects:

1. To provide the nucleus for a Hindu convent under the Ramakrishna Mission.

2. To provide a Home for poor and destitute widows, and to give them such education and training as will qualify them to earn an independent living and live a life of dedicated service.

3. To provide all facilities for the education of girls through schools and hostels conducted on sound traditions of character training and moral and religious instruction co-ordinated with intellectual and physical culture.

The institution has for the present three sections, the High School, the Training School, and the Elementary School.

The strength of the High School, the Training School, and the Elementary School in December, 1942 were 597, 207, and 198 respectively.

The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras

A Technical section for the training of electricians, fitters, and carpenters was run by the Madras Students' Home at its newly constructed Workshop at Tyagarayanagar and the Home Workshop at Mylapore, the number of its students being 346 (fitters 275, electricians 17, machinists 36, and turners 18).

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Perianaikenpalayam (Dt. Coimbatore)

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Perianaikenpalayam, Dt. Coimbatore opened a Teachers' Training School in a newly constructed building on 17 August, 1942.

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar (Behar)

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, Behar, revived its Vocational Section (Tailoring, Typewriting, Fine Arts) since July, 1943.

The Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Pitha, Belur Math

Swami Vivekananda wanted to build up at the Mission Headquarters at Belur a centre of learning, the principal objects of which would be to impart, after the model of the ancient Gurukula system, that type of education to our youngmen by which their character would be formed and they would be able to stand on their own feet in the struggle of life. Following in the footsteps of the Swami the Ramakrishna Mission made an humble beginning in that direction in the early part of 1941 and started the Sarada Pitha as one of its branch centres on an extensive plot of land adjacent to the Belur Math premises.

The Sarada Pitha includes in its comprehensive scheme two main sections—general and technical. In the general section, in addition to all the advantages of modern university education, the boys will get ample opportunity of imbibing our ancient culture in its depth and fulness, and in its technical section it will train up boys in various productive industries and impart commercial and technical education to them so as to equip them for an independent career in trades, manufactures, and such other pursuits. It is hoped that in the fulness of time it will accommodate various other branches of oriental and occidental learning as well.

As a first step towards the materialization of this broad scheme, the Sarada Pitha started in its general section an Inter-

mediate Arts College of a residential character, in July 1941, under the designation of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira.

Advantage was also taken of the Government's scheme to train up various kinds of technicians, and early in 1942 the technical section of the Sarada Pitha came into existence. This department which is now training nearly 250 boys in different trades, if adequately financed, is sure to make good progress in the future. A comprehensive syllabus of selected trades suitable to the needs of the country will soon be drawn up. The construction of a large workshop, an administrative block, and two hostel blocks for the technicians are nearing completion.

The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, 18, Jadoo Lal Mullick Road, Calcutta

The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama at 18, Jadoo Lal Mullick Road, Calcutta was started this year as a hostel for college students.

The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Bankura, Bengal

The building for the Saradananda Students' Home has been completed.

The Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Clinic, New Delhi

The Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, acquired in 1941 some plots of land from the Delhi Improvement Trust in order to have a permanent home for the Clinic and its residential staff. The foundation stone of the Clinic was laid in November, 1941; but the construction of the building has been held up for emergency reasons due to the war.

A new scheme known as the 'Home Treatment Scheme' was started in August, 1942 and continued till the end of the year. This scheme is now going to be a part of the regular work of the Clinic as the Government has sanctioned an additional grant for the work.

The Ramakrishna Mission Maternity Clinic, Jalpaiguri, Bengal

A separate building for the Maternity Clinic was constructed in 1942 in co-operation with the Government of Bengal and the work was shifted to the new premises in the beginning of the present year.

The Ramakrishna Mission Indoor Hospital, Taki, 24-Parganas, Bengal

An indoor hospital known as the Swami Shivananda Sevashrama, founded in 1937 by Dr. Ajit Nath Roy Choudhury, a very well-known and sacrificing Zemindar of Taki, came under the management of the Mission in 1940. A maternity ward has also been added to it in 1942 under the name of the 'Kamini Mohan Memorial Maternity Ward'.

The Kankurgachhi Yogodyana (near Calcutta)

The Kankurgachhi Yogodyana, where also the relics of Shri Ramakrishna Deva are preserved and worshipped, was transferred to the Trustees of the Belur Math on Monday, the 12th April, 1943. Regular Pujâ, religious discourses, publication of the books of Dr. Ram Ch. Dutta on the life and teachings of Shri Ramakrishna form its special features.

Foreign Work

A temporary Vedanta Society under the leadership of Swami Yatiswarananda was started at Philadelphia (U.S.A.) during the latter period of the year 1942.

BIRTHDAY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna falls on February 25, 1944.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX *MARCH, 1944* No. 3



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

BE BRAVE

By Swami Turiyananda

My own will is of little consequence, 'the Divine will takes effect'. I am grateful for your wishing my health. My heartfelt thanks to you for this. Your desire for realizing God is very right.

> For one who has realized It here on earth there is true life. For one who has not, great is the destruction. (*Kena Up.*, II. 5).

It is fortunate if He can be realized in this body, otherwise there is no doubt that great harm lies in store. Whoever seeks Him finds Him. 'By him It is attained whom It chooses.' (*Katha Up.*, I. ii. 23). 'Vain is my search; whoever finds Him to him He belongs.' The Lord can be realized very easily. He is very merciful. He promises to appear in a trice if He is sought for earnestly. But who seeks for Him? Such is the great *mâyâ*. He has made us so busy about other things that we do not feel inclined to seek for Him. Recall the words of the Master about the bags of rice in the rice godowns: 'Outside a quantity of popped rice is left on a winnowing fan; drawn by its smell rats come and eat their fill of it and do not come to know of the big bags of rice—though they are just there.' Similarly persons are intoxicated with the happiness derived from wife and children. There is no seeking for the Divine bliss, though He is within. Such is the great *mâyâ*.

> Such is the mysterious spell spread by the magic of Mahâmâyâ that Brahmâ and Vishnu are under its power. What can a person know of it?

> They dig a tank and place bamboo fish-traps into which fish enter. The way for ingress and egress is open, yet the fish cannot escape.
> The silk-worm weaves the cocoon, it lies in its power to tear it open. But thanks to Mahâmâyâ the cocoon is closed; the silk-worm meets its doom from its own secretions.

Such is the enchantment of Mahâmâyâ. However, there are these words of assurance:

> Those who come to me, cross this *mâyâ*. . . . Take refuge in Him with all thy heart,

O, Bhârata ; by His grace shalt thou attain supreme peace (and) the eternal abode. (Gita, XVIII. 62).

Faith is necessary. There is no more fear if faith emerges by His grace.

The man with *shraddhâ*, the devoted, the master of one's senses, attains (this) knowledge. Having attained knowledge one goes at once to the Supreme Peace. (Gita, IV. 39).

'What does it matter what others say, for this is realized by oneself. It is felt within. It is known by one's own self—do the words of others make any difference? There is perfect bliss within. 'He does not repent nor desires.' It is not at all surprising to realize this by the grace of the Master. A room which lay dark for a thousand years is filled with light in a trice by the light of a match stick. The Master used to say, 'All jackals howl alike.' That is to say, all have the same experience on the dawning of knowledge. Their utterances do not conflict. They are all Mother's children. Many are the dogmas and various the paths, but all reach the same place. The goal is one.

As all waters run into the ocean, so Thou art the one goal of men whatever be the various paths, straight or crooked, along which they may travel due to variety of tastes. (*Shivamahimnah stotram*).

'The uncle moon is the common uncle of all (children).' Is there any doubt in this? Why should you be of weak heart? You are Mother's child—infinite power is within you. 'O listen, of whom is he afraid whose Mother is the Divine Brahman?' Ramprasad sang:

I stand with the charm of the name of Kâli all around me.
You will be punished, O Death, should you say bitter things ;
I will tell it to Mother.
Shyâmâ, the trampler of Death, is indeed a very crazy girl.
Listen me, O Death, I am no (feeble) child untimely born that I shall put up with thy words.
This is no sweet in a child's hand that you will wheedle it out and eat.

What! Mother's child wanting in strength! By Her grace infinite power lies in your grasp. The Master used to say, 'She is no "godmother" but one's own true mother.'

The Divine Mother is everywhere; at Her feet lie 'Gaya, Ganges and Benares'.

Thou art the Divine Shakti of infinite prowess, the seed of the cosmos, and the supreme *mâyâ*. O Goddess, Thou hast cast everything under Thy spell, and pleased Thou art, Thou dispenser of freedom in this world.

This Divine Energy is our Mother. What fear can there be for us? Why should we be weak? One who thinks himself to be weak becomes weak. You are Mother's child—why should you be feeble? You hold great strength within you. What can be beyond your power by Mother's grace? How long does it take for your notion of 'me and mine' to disappear? The Mother, by Her grace, can enlighten you in a moment. And it is a fact that She does.

OLD INDIA AND FUTURE EUROPE

By the Editor

I

In the early days of 'delicious intoxication' induced by the success of science, Hume wrote :

If we take in our hand any volume, of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance, let us ask, Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact or evidence? No. Commit it, then, to the flames ; for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion.

And thus the West prepared for scientific progress. The rise of the West synchronized with the decline of the East. Or to put the matter more realistically, the loss of emphasis on spiritual values in the West was counterbalanced by an unprecedented material advancement, whereas the loss of moral and

spiritual vigour in the East was all the more luridly underlined by an arrested economic progress. There was, however, one relieving feature in the East. When the West, or at least the progressive part of it, in its self-confident vigour, openly decried old-world values, the East in its dotage did not dare go so far, so that those values continued here in a moribund state, making themselves cognizable to discriminating eyes alone. But now things are taking a new turn. The West is becoming increasingly conscious of some defect in its modern system, whereas the East apes the ways that prevailed in the West a generation ago. The Eastern youths still glibly swear by those shibboleths whose emptiness has been proved to the hilt, theoretically in the past and practically during the present world crisis.

The first World War followed by the present armageddon, has despoiled the West of its easy-going optimism. It has now discovered that science supplies improved instruments to unimproved moral babies, so that instead of progress we have holocausts. Western intelligence, though outwardly chuckling at the stern warning of Oswald Spengler about the decline of the West, has all along been feeling ill at ease. There was a premonition of a coming cataclysm, which the West wanted to avert by all means. As a result, a huge literature, dealing with the future of the Euro-American world, has grown. The writers generally fall into two main groups—those who find the remedy in more efficient organization and extension of the material instruments of progress and human relationships accruing from them, and those others who stand for a thorough overhauling of the moral and spiritual outlook.

II

As a representative of the first school we may select Mr. H. G. Wells. Speaking about himself he writes :

> My instincts about foreigners are as insular as my principles are cosmopolitan. (*The Shape of Things to Come*, p. 16).

The reader wonders how these two attitudes can be reconciled. But a solution is found when he realizes that Wells's universalism aims only at a wider application of those values in English life, or at most in European life, which according to him, are the best suited for his 'Modern State'. He has little need for a moral or spiritual reorientation. Nor need he look beyond the European frontiers for better things. According to him there should be a clear plan for the future 'World-State', and then it should be materialized through controls, dictatorships, etc., by 'the rather unimaginative forcible type' which is 'the necessary executive of a revolution'.

> First came the intellectuals, men living aloof from responsibility, men often devoid of the qualities of leadership and practical organization. . . . Such men are primarily necessary in the human adventure, because they build up a sound diagnosis of events ; they reveal more and more clearly and imperatively the course that lies before the race, and in that task their lives are spent and justified. Then it is that the intelligent executive type, capable of concentration upon a complex idea once it is grasped, and resisting discursiveness as a drag on efficiency, comes into action. Their imaginative limitation is a necessary virtue for the task they have to do. (*Ibid.*, p. 267).

The relationship between the prophet and the leader of a revolution can be well understood by what existed between Karl Marx and Lenin. Karl Marx's chief merit lay in his 'clear recognition of the ultimate dependence of social and political forms and re-actions upon physical necessity ("the Materialist Conception of History")'. (*Ibid.*, p. 50). It was the genius of Lenin who organized the Communist party and modernized the Marxian ideas that made Marx's name a cardinal one in history.

A sound theory borrowed from someone by an executive genius is the desideratum for a world reconstruction, which will come through revolutions. The executive leader need not bother about the moral content of the theory he accepts, or his own spiritual nature. The world suffers not so much because of lack of morality or religion as because

of a lack of a world outlook and proper education and organization for it. It is customary to ascribe the failure of modern civilization to the inability of spirituality to keep pace with material advance. But the real disease is diagnosed thus:

> The biological and especially social inventions were lagging far behind the practical advances of the exacter, simpler sciences. . . . The over-running of the biologically old by the mechanically new, due to these differences in timing, was inevitable, and it reached its maximum in the twentieth century. . . . Under the stimulus of mechanical invention and experimental physics it (human society) achieved . . . a hypertrophy of bone, muscle, and stomach, without any corresponding enlargement of its nervous controls. (*Ibid.*, p. 47). . . It arose naturally and necessarily from the irregular and disproportionate growth of human appliances as compared with the extension of political and social intelligence. . . . (p. 65).

Controls are absolutely necessary. Soviet Russia has shown the way for reconstruction of society. Its five-year plan may not be ideal as a plan, but as an idea it shows the way to a higher social achievement. The present-day world, following the 'pseudo-philosopher Hegel' thinks that the 'World-State' will 'come about automatically by the inherent forces in things' (p. 45). But the 'World-State' can come only through a control of human destiny (p. 42).

We may remember in this connection that, true to the Eastern ideals, Mahatma Gandhi's economic ideas differ widely from those of the West. Faithful to the Indian standpoint, he thinks that human society cannot progress by multiplication of wants. But Wells, a protagonist of the modern European outlook, writes:

> Human Society, so long as productive efficiency increases, is *obliged* to raise its standards of consumption and extend its activities year by year, or collapse. And if its advance does not go on, it will drop into routine, boredom, viciousness and decay. Steadfastly the quantity and variety of things must increase. (P. 54).

Before the 'World-State' comes into being, and before continued progress can be ensured, there must be 'a huge development of and application of the sciences of social psychology', a 'monetary reconstruction', 'a thoroughgoing socialism throughout the world', and 'a complete revolution in education' (p. 107).

The world is now passing through 'a phase of throwing out bright but disconnected ideas'. Our future lies in how rapidly we can consolidate the 'social and educational science into an applicable form' (p. 257).

What is the basic theory of the new education? Up till now we are habituated to think that 'moral values, bias and prejudices, hatred and so forth come by nature'. But we have to remember that

> Men are born, but citizens are made. A child takes to itself what is brought to it. It accepts examples, usage, tradition, and general ideas. All the forms of its social reactions and most of its emotional interpretations are provided by its education. (Pp. 258-9).

Democratic liberty of choice of goal is not the best foundation for the 'World-State':

> It is no good asking people what they want. . . . That is the error of democracy. You have first to think out what they ought to want if society is to be saved. Then you have to tell them what they want and see that they get it. (P. 262).

And yet it will be wrong to infer that a few intelligent leaders at the head is all that we need. Fascism, Nazism, and Communism fail exactly because of this wrong supposition. There must be scope for free criticism, though there must be no opposition. If a directive organization is bad, it may be broken or thrown away, but one must rid one's mind altogether of a conception of see-saw and give and take as a proper method in human affairs (p. 264).

III

This rather lengthy analysis of Wells's views is necessary to prepare the reader for what follows. Wells, in fact, does not present anything new. He only cuts the t's and dots the i's of modern European thought, and at times he italicizes or deletes a few sentences. Mr. Aldous Huxley's *The Brave New World* may be regarded as a *reductio ad*

absurdum of *The Shape of Things to Come*. Huxley openly declares in his *Ends and Means* that Europe cannot be saved merely by organizational efficiency. This can ensure material prosperity for a time, but it cannot uplift humanity morally and spiritually.

Now, economic and political reform is a branch of what may be called preventive ethics. The aim of preventive ethics is to create social circumstances of such a nature that individuals will not be given opportunity for behaving in an undesirable, that is to say an excessively 'attached', way. . . . So far so good. But we must not forget that reforms may deliver man from one set of evils, only to lead them into evils of another kind. . . . The wickedness is not abolished; it is only provided with a different set of opportunities for self-expression. (Pp. 17-20).

The fundamental problem, therefore, is how to enrich man's ethical nature. We cannot afford to enter into details. We can only refer to two fundamental facts. The aim of reform should be the production of non-attached men. But as ethics without a metaphysical background is a neutral thing—liable equally to be used for material prosperity, national aggrandizement, or international slaughter—the ideal man must have the best possible metaphysical outlook. A 'Mechanomorphic cosmology', which regards the universe as a great machine pointlessly grinding its way towards ultimate stagnation and death—a universe in which men are tiny offshoots of the universal machine, running down to their own private deaths—leaves purpose entirely out of human life. But man naturally seeks for purposes in things. And when the prevailing scientific outlook fails to supply this felt want,

Any doctrine that offers to restore point and purpose to life is eagerly welcomed. Hence the enormous success of the nationalistic and communistic idolatries which deny any meaning to the universe as a whole, but insist on the importance and significance of certain arbitrarily selected parts of the whole—the deified nation, the divine class. (*Ibid.*, p. 141).

Separate existences, however, are illusions of common sense. Scientific investigation reveals that concrete reality is closely knit together. Competition among individuals or groups cannot lead to progress. Progress must be based on a more substantial metaphysical view. Progress is dependent on the preponderance of intra-specific co-operation over intra-specific competition. There can be no progress apart from progress in charity. But

charity cannot progress towards universality unless the prevailing cosmology is either monotheistic or pantheistic—unless there is a general belief that all men are the 'sons of God' or, in Indian phrase, that 'thou art that—tat tvam asi.' (P. 9).

So much about individuals in groups and the metaphysical beliefs that should lead them. Let us now turn to the individuals themselves. For in the last analysis, it is the individuals who are the raw materials for a lasting society. We know to our cost that the treatment of individuals *en masse* with political goals in view, leads to no lasting result. All that organizational effort should, therefore, aim at, is to produce the proper type of individuals, i.e., non-attached persons.

The ideal man is the non-attached man. Non-attached to his bodily sensations and lusts. Non-attached to his craving for power and possessions. Non-attached to the objectives of these desires. (P. 4).

Multiplication of want is not the best method of progress; for addiction cannot be destroyed by satiation, but tends, if indulged, to become a demonic passion. Planning for national prosperity is not always desirable; for national planning leads to international chaos. Dictatorship cannot lead us to our goal.

Marxism as an idea may be excellent. But in practice it is difficult to have all its implications fully realized.

Dictatorship by a small privileged minority does not lead to liberty, justice, peace, and co-operation of non-attached, but active and responsible individuals. It leads either to more dictatorship, or to war, or to revolution, or (more probably) to all three in fairly rapid succession. (P. 70).

Capitalism is a bad thing, as it produces a multiplicity of petty dictators. But state socialism tends to lead to a

centralized totalitarian dictatorship (p. 96). Equality of income for all is 'probably impossible, and perhaps even undesirable' (p. 185).

> Equality in action—in other words, reciprocal good behaviour—is the only kind of equality that possesses a real existence. (P. 194).

Education in the modern world fails in its mission in so far as it supplies no principle in terms of which knowledge and experience can be integrated. Wells puts forth his universalism as this integrating principle. But Huxley would give his alumni a more spiritual frame of reference.

Thus, almost at every turn Huxley is opposed to Wells. No wonder that Huxley '(1894-2004)' is characterized in *The Shape of Things to Come* as 'one of the most brilliant of reactionary writers' (p. 364). None the less, this 'reactionary writer' appeals to us, since he does not confine his vision to the Euro-American field. He clearly recognizes that a mere expansion of the present-day European technique or a mere heightening of its tempo will not solve the problem. Europe is out to play *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark. If she is serious about her future, she must turn her attention to the inner world, to the things of the spirit, to the man 'non-attached to self and to what are called "things of this world" '.

IV

René Guénon is another writer with broad catholicity and wide vision. He fully realizes that

> So long as Western people imagine that there is only one 'civilization' at different stages of development, no mutual understanding will be possible. (*East and West*, p. 10).

There are different civilizations growing along different lines and there should be no question of superiority or inferiority without making it quite clear from what point of view the things to be compared are being considered. Till recently 'civilization was Europe itself, it was a patent which the European world granted itself' (p. 28).

And with this was allied the idea of indefinite progress which convinced the European world that it had entered upon a new era of absolute civilization, from which there could be no sliding back. But when an intellectual diagnosis is made, it is found that Europe has come under a 'gigantic collective hallucination' by which the 'vainest fantasies are taken as incontestable realities' (p. 31). But, truth to say,

> The belief in indefinite progress is, all told, nothing more than the most ingenuous and grossest of all kinds of optimism ; whatever form this belief may take, it is always sentimental in essence, even when it is concerned with material progress. (P. 41).

The contrast between the East and the West is very pronounced. Western science means analysis and dispersion; Eastern knowledge means synthesis and concentration (p. 43). The West has not been able to prove its absolute superiority over the East. When, therefore, it tries to impose its civilization on the East it adopts many subterfuges; there is an atmosphere of insincerity all around.

> In them the spirit of conquest goes under the disguise of moralist pretexts, and in the name of liberty they would force the world to imitate them. (P. 44).

Modern Europe is weltering in the mire of intellectual degradation, because of an absence of metaphysical knowledge, a negation of all knowledge that is not scientific, and arbitrary, limitation of scientific knowledge to certain particular domains (p. 57). Its education is defective inasmuch as it results in 'replacing intelligence almost entirely by memory' (p. 69). Europeans are so impermeable to higher metaphysical ideas and so self-complacent that a scholar like Deussen thinks of explaining Shankaracharya to the Hindus through the ideas of Schopenhauer (p. 78)! The Westerners have adopted speed and change as the only ideals of life. The part played by 'vital dash' in their lives is well known. And

instinct and sentiment are identified with a being's very depth.

> Evolution is, all told, nothing but change, backed up by an illusion with regard to the direction and quality of this change ; evolution and progress are one and the same thing, to all intents and purposes, . . . (P. 91).

It will not do to base future society on morality, for 'morality in itself is something essentially sentimental'. A moral code 'cannot be anything more than a rule of action'. Modern Europe, interested in action more than in anything else, will naturally put stores by morality. But humanity wants a greater value than mere morality. Even intellect, as it is commonly understood, is no sure basis of future reconstruction, for intellect in the modern world is a shallow thing.

Where is the remedy then? The remedy lies in studying the Eastern ideals from the Eastern point of view :

> The West, through understanding the Eastern civilizations, would come nearer to being brought back into the traditional paths which it so rashly and foolishly broke away from. . . . (P. 128). What we call traditional civilization is one that is based on principles in the true sense of the word, that is, where the intellectual realm dominates all the others, and where all things, science and social institutions alike, proceed from it directly or indirectly, being no more than contingent, secondary, and subordinate applications of purely intellectual truths. (P. 166). When we speak of purely intellectual truths, it is always the universal order, and no other, which is in question ; here lies the domain of metaphysical knowledge, that is super-individual and super-rational knowledge itself, knowledge that is intuitive, beyond all analysis, and independent of what is relative. (P. 168).

Not being based on such intuitive realization, modern European civilization has set up anarchy and individualism in place of intellectual hierarchy, family, and community, which are the real foundations of an equitable social life. To get at these foundations and to re-adopt the traditional view, we have to look to India, and to Hinduism in particular (p. 238). Hindu traditionalism need not be identified with inelasticity. Tradition admits all the aspects of truth, 'it does not set itself against any legitimate adaptation' (p. 241).

V

We have so far presented before the readers the conclusions of three representative minds of the West. Wells believes that his island will some day expand into the universe and thus end his insularity. Huxley enters into the region of morals and metaphysics and thinks that the salvation of modern civilization lies in making men better : it is better men that can bring in a better society. For this, and for throwing more light on the discarded values, he turns often to the East. But he seems to believe with Romain Rolland that the West can dig up its old foundations and build a new society on them independently of the East. Guénon is all admiration for the East. The West has lost its 'tradition' irretrievably and unless it takes its lessons from the East, there can be no revival. With Wells's views we need not deal any longer, for Huxley and Guénon have given the quietus to them. The difference between the two latter is not vital; for so far as India is concerned, she has gone so long whoring after the West, and through continued thraldom has lost so much of mental balance, that she, too, is practically unaware of her own treasures. So whether Huxley takes the Indian ideals as models for comparison, or Guénon takes them as living realities to be inspired and instructed by, to us in India they are nothing but ideals to be conscious of and striven after. It is from this point of view that we shall now make a hurried survey of some of the ideals not dealt with in the earlier sections.

We have noted that society needs a solid basis of spiritual realization, the world cannot keep spirituality any longer in cold storage. Spirituality alone can supply the principles which can determine all lasting social relationships. In order that this spirituality may be kept ever in view and in order that it may be a living force there must be constant contact of men with it.

The mystics of the East sink into their contemplation, the more directly to commune with the will of humanity. Escaping the brawling noise of every day, they can through the silence hear the murmuring of truth, and in silence release it to pass into the turbulence of men and women to sweeten it and to keep them from perishing. (Gilbert Cannan's *Anatomy of Society*, p. 179).

The modern world needs a mystic connection with Ultimate Reality. The Hindu Yogic systems are eminently fitted for the purpose of leading the modern world of bustle and becoming, of the purposelessness of intellectual life and self-centred megalomania to the silence of intuition and being. Yoga can open for it that flood-gate of inspiration that can make of life an ever widening field of lasting achievements and not a mere running down to nothingness.

The beauty of the Hindu system is that through it each can have his private as well as public satisfaction. While the other systems offer only one way of salvation for all, the Hindu system offers a plethora of alternatives suitable for various mental stages; and the relative fulfilment of the individual's wants clears the way for social understanding and integration. The Hindus ensure social peace through individual spiritual uplift, whereas the West aims at general uplift through a regimentation of the individuals. Personality does receive the highest recognition in Hindu spiritual thought, though that personality must have ultimate unity as its goal. Once this attitude is accepted and its implications are worked out on the social and political fields, imperialism, trusteeship, mandates, colonization, and ideological wars are bound to come to an end.

The antidote to the modern disease of personal acquisitiveness is *vairâgya* or non-attachment. But this non-attachment is not a negative virtue, nor is it simply a personal affair.

To abandon this struggle for private happiness, to expel all eagerness of temporary desire, to burn with a passion for eternal things—this is Emancipation, and this the Free Man's Worship. (Bertrand Russell).

Western thought is as yet slow to realize the truth and importance of another Hindu idea—we mean *karma* and the consequent transmigration. A petty short life here and an eternal damnation or everlasting bliss hereafter, give poor consolation to ordinary mortals. Reason, too, becomes sceptical before such an unintelligible hypothesis. It opens too wide the gates of pre-destination and fatalism. Besides, on this supposition the problem of evil and God's justice become inexplicable. But *karma* challenges our manhood to take full responsibility for what we are and what we ought to be and it shows the way to infinite possibilities.

But if Hindu spiritual thought is individualistic, it does not lead to anarchy; because it teaches us to respect men as nothing but potential divinities. Each man has a right to his private belief; and it is because of that linking up of individuality with unity—because of that divinity in the process of unfoldment—that man deserves all help, sympathy, and toleration. The ancients declared : 'Truth though one is called variously by various sages.' That sets the norm for all social behaviour. India cannot tolerate regimentation and dictatorship with all their horrid consequences—dullness of spiritual life, loss of initiative, proneness to propaganda, worship of nationality, international friction, and war, under the pressure of which the weary spirit cries out :

Europe no longer makes me react. This world is too familiar to me to give new shapes to my being: it is too limited. The whole of Europe nowadays is one mind only. I wish to escape to spaces where my life needs be transformed if it is to survive. (Keyserling).

The fault of the European mind is that it relies too much on outside suggestion, on what the public want it to be. It has now to look inside for ordering life afresh, for drawing fresh inspiration for newer achievements, so that personality may be fully developed and individuality may not feel itself lost in conformity. Instead of relying on others individuals must now become architects of their

own inner life. God must now take the place of nation and society.

Then there is our faith in the pristine purity of the soul. No sin can touch it. A man weighed down with sin is a potential tyrant. A school-boy who comes into contact with the birch rod too often, is bound to be a social autocrat or a nincompoop with all his personality rounded off. Purity scintillates purity all around, and a firm belief in one's innate purity is bound to keep all sin at arm's length. A belief that one is a sinner is a standing invitation to one to sin off and on. Excessive pre-occupation with sin generally generates an excessive pre-occupation with the selfish separate self.

Hinduism is criticized for its emphasis on supermundane things. But one fails to understand how a mere acceptance of the matter-of-fact world as it appears to each individual soul, can give the impetus for a higher life: there must needs be transcendence of some sort somewhere. Society cannot progress unless individuals transcend their private worlds. Nor can humanism replace God-intoxication, for humanism represents only very limited values while the march to Divinity means infinite progress. Universalism is also a poor substitute for absolute spiritual fulfilment. Besides, Vedantism, rightly understood, does not negate the world; it teaches its votaries to realize Brahman everywhere. Hinduism thus presents a higher and fuller world view.

Hinduism feels no need for conversion. It may state its case, and others may accept its views intellectually and spiritually: there the matter ends. But other religions embark on a career of saving people's souls, though they often end by killing them physically, culturally, morally, and spiritually.

The Absolute monism of India has vast potentialities for social welfare. As Huxley has shown, belief in a personal moral God often leads to fanaticism, persecution, and sectarian war. The antidote is a belief in an all-pervasive spiritual reality. Vedanta believes in the equality of men and truth of all faiths, and practical Vedanta insists on selfless service. Vedanta stands by reason and realization. To take one's stand merely on revelation is antithetical to communal understanding. Hinduism adopts a rationalistic attitude in the matter of religion on the plane of usage (*vyavahâra*). Revealed things, so far as they relate to the matter-of-fact world must be rationally comprehensible. And transcendental truths, so far as they are matters of realizations, are not to be exchanged for theological discussions.

In these and many other ways, then, Hinduism has an important positive part to play in all future plans for peace. And it lies with us Hindus to explore this possibility fully by building our lives according to the true Hindu tradition.

ARE WE CIVILIZED ?

By Swami Nirvedananda

We moderners boast of our civilization. The modern era, no doubt, has to its credit epoch-making achievements of science. The inscrutable atom has disclosed its secrets. Physical Nature is almost within our grasp. Her immutable laws bend before the inventions of science. Man moves like a master through land, air, and sea at an amazing speed. News and views go round the world in the twinkling of an eye. The rigours of climate, weather, disease, and all that, vanish before the magic wand of science. Surely, we can

boast of all these and thousand other trophies of science. Yet, are we in a position to assert that we are civilized?

Civilization means a lot. The core of it, however, is refinement. Refinement of our sentiments, thoughts, and conduct is really what it stands for. Anything less is said to be vulgar, boorish, savage. Refinement being a process, it must have stages and grades. When our refinement goes ahead of a certain stage, our civilization may be said to have advanced.

Let us see how far our civilization has advanced from the earliest stage, that of the cave-man, the very starting point of human history.

The cave-man was self-centred. He was swayed by instinctive impulses as much as the other denizens of the forest. He was as ferocious as the beasts of prey. His life was a non-stop fight for existence not only with elemental fury but also with brutes and brute-men. He had, perforce, to dominate others if he was to live. If he had any brain-storm, it would usually be over the invention of weapons that could kill his foes or animals for his food. To him Nature was a mystery, an object of awe and terror. His life was simple, his needs were few, in fact, no more than those of other animals. His joys and sorrows centred round the essential biological demands. His budding mind was no more than a handmaid of life.

In many respects we are far ahead of this crude, primitive stage. The starting point of civilization is beyond our ken. We have secured our life against the furies of Nature. The beasts of prey are at a safe distance from our abodes. Our skill as well as weapons have improved so far as to make the hunting of wild animals a sport. The discovery of the technique of raising food from the soil and from domesticated animals has, by a single stroke, lifted us above the prowling dangers surrounding the cave-man's search for food. We have practically banished fear from all these spheres of primitive existence.

From its earliest stage on the human plane our mind has developed beyond recognition. Our mind is no longer a mere vassal of life. Besides meeting the biological demands in a much more thorough and extensive manner, our mind has created a distinct field of its own with an entirely novel set of appetites and values. We hunger for, knowledge, we crave for beauty, we seek ethical values. They give us intellectual delight, emotional ecstasy, and moral satisfaction unknown to our primitive forbears. Indeed, when we look at this phase of our life, the cave-man appears to be no more than a mere brute in human form.

Let us now probe our mind a bit beneath its surface. Is it not a fact that all the instinctive cravings of the brute-man are still lurking there in all their rapacity? Are we not shamelessly selfish in our thoughts and desires?

Of course, we may very well be proud of our sky-scraping intellect and its amazing exploits on various fronts. Yet, we have to own that we are no more than bondslaves of crude passions. Greed, lust, malice, ferocity, and all the ugly brood of crass selfishness are at the steering wheel of our conduct. Our reason is helplessly set aside when it goes against the urge of the baser instincts. Quite frequently we do things that are decried by our own sober judgement. Very often we find that we are on the wrong track; yet we cannot simply help it. We suffer, we repent. And this, perhaps, is the greatest tragedy of our life—we cannot act up to our reason. We are not trained to develop our will, that alone can put a brake on the unworthy impulses and steer through the path of reason. A dynamic and well-directed will is the very basis of character. But character-building, that is, proper training of the will is none of the business of the educational systems of this day. This is why mostly we are intellectual giants but spiritual pigmies.

And this is not all. Failing to use reason for shaping our conduct, we

mobilize its strength for justifying our vile deeds. Our intellect is kept busy in rationalizing all that we are forced to do under the whip-hand of our baser instincts. With perverted reason we proceed to whitewash our motives. Indeed, we have mastered the trick of hiding the hideous contents of our mind beneath a polished and charming exterior. And this passes as the acme of our refinement. We have guillotined truth and honesty and placed tact and diplomacy on the pedestal. We are civilized in the sense that we can successfully keep the brute in us concealed behind a smoke-screen of sweet words and noble ideology. Looked at from this angle we are no more than camouflaged cave-men. The cave-men might have been beastly, we appear to be fiendish.

No doubt, we have built up societies and States and framed laws for regulating our lives and securing public peace. Anti-social activities are dubbed as crimes and put down ruthlessly by the State. Slips from the ethical standard are penalized no less by social taboo. But these only drive our mischievous propensities underground and do not cure them. And this is why we seek cover whenever we are led by a base impulse to do a dirty job. We are up to anything only if we can evade laws and hoodwink society. Crimes, therefore, multiply and become more nefarious. Societies and States fail to secure the peace they seek. So long as the will of the individual will not be trained to control the baser instincts, this state of things will continue in spite of law-courts and social opprobrium.

So much about the life of the individual. Collective life appears to be more shocking. Ambition and jealousy, unseemly scramble for power, exploitation and discrimination, fratricidal fights in the name of classes and nations present a ghastly picture of jungle-life all over the world. In every State or society a microscopic minority, perched on political, economic, or social vantage grounds, ceaselessly dominate and exploit the teeming millions. Safely entrenched in power, the privileged custodians of vested interests of various types and shades drain the resources of their fellow-men and reduce them almost to beasts of burden. They do this without any scruple, without any compunction. And while doing all these, they never cease declaring from house-tops that they are inspired by the best of motives. Do they not really look like organized gangs of camouflaged cave-men?

And all the while, how do the masses fare? In almost every country, however civilized it may claim to be, a vast majority reel under oppression. Everywhere suffering is the badge of the masses. Of course, it varies in intensity from country to country. Yet it is there all the same. Colour, birth, wealth, or some other accident determines the pressure to be put upon a section of humanity. These go to brand a human individual as a social pariah, political underdog, or an economic slave, or even a combination of all these. In any case his life is miserable.

Day in and day out, the masses have to toil for eking out a miserable existence. Leisure they have none. Cultural refinement does not seem to be meant for them. Luxury, of course, is a forbidden fruit. They live simply to drudge so that the privileged few may get milk and honey. On the top of this there is the fear of unemployment. This fear crushes their spirit and makes them kotow to the bosses. They are forced to remain subhuman.

The capitalists are having their day. The thousand and one amenities of life brought in by science appear to be their close preserve. They are a clever lot. Even under a democratic Government they know how to grip the State machine and then get a stranglehold on the people. With the Government in its thumb, capital grinds labour and the backward peoples on earth. They have the knack of seizing power and wielding it for bringing untold profits to their pockets. Through the clever ruse

of nationalism they can mobilize the masses in an instant and make them dance to their tune. It is not unlikely that ammunition magnates may manoeuvre nations into a war!

Thus even in democratic States, where the people enjoy a good deal of freedom of speech and personal liberty, they are made victims of appalling wants and outrageous iniquities. Indeed, corruption as well as false and inadequate representation have made democracy an eye-wash. No serious effort has yet been made for a just and equitable distribution of privilege. Organized labour has been making insistent demand but advancing at a snail's pace. War conditions bring them very near their coveted goal of equality. They pay the price with their life's blood. But as soon as peace comes they are thrust back into the old grooves. They become disillusioned. In spite of big promises, the capitalists have been playing this game so long, and this even in the democratic States.

In the modern totalitarian States, run mostly on socialistic lines, the grievances of labour are claimed to have been substantially reduced. In one of these States class discrimination appears to be at its minimum; and food, education as well as other amenities of life are within everybody's reach, so long, of course, as he or she does not choose to remain idle. Yet the condition of these people is not covetable. They have to barter their personal liberty for economic equality. Dictatorship sits heavily on individual freedom. Their thought and speech are regimented by the State as much as their food and clothes. This is a horrible condition for human beings to live in. Without freedom of thought and speech individuals are apt to be mechanized and converted into mere parts of the State machine. A free thinker is a misfit; and, therefore, he is either crushed or brushed aside. However precious service one may have rendered towards the growth of the State, one can oppose or even criticise the State policy only at the peril of one's life. Under dictatorship of any brand nobody's life is safe, nobody's property is secure, unless one stamps out one's own manhood and reduces oneself into a mere puppet.

The bulk of the people, therefore, in any State, democratic or totalitarian, groan under tyranny and sink to subhuman depths. Add to this the condition of the masses in the empires, colonial possessions, and the so-called mandated States strewn over Asia and Africa and ruled by big powers. Preyed upon by perpetual want and fear, they have become 'next door neighbours to brutes'. And the tyrants, representing the vested interests and the privileged classes all over the world, present, more than anything else, the depth of human degradation. They are greedy, unscrupulous, and heartless in their dealings and diabolical in their profession. This sums up our inner life at the moment.

Beneath the pomp and grandeur, flourish and glitter, intellectual feats and triumphs of science of the present day, humanity appears to be sliding back to the brute level. It is under a spell of atavism. Our civilization is a misnomer when we are losing our foothold on the human plane.

Yet man can become divine. He can rise above selfishness and carnality and sacrifice his all for the well-being of his fellows. It is his prerogative to stand for unrestricted equality, fraternity, and liberty. Universal and selfless love is the essence of his soul. The kingdom of heaven is really within him. Only if man would care to unlock its gates he would step on to the divine plane. He would become a superman of the divine order. And this is the goal towards which humanity has to be led. The path has been chalked out from time to time by its man-gods, Râma, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, Shankara, Ramanuja, Chaitanya, Nanak, and a host of saints and seers. Whenever there has been a confusion about the goal, the potential divinity of man has been made manifest through

the luminous life of a man-god. There is no mistake about it. Man has to evolve into superman of the divine type. The craze for becoming superman of the monstrous type is just an aberration. Some openly avow it, others are unconsciously under its grip. But this craze is suicidal. If not checked in time it may work the extinction of the human race. One world war coming at the heel of another is a pointer. We should become wiser and start treading the right path. Then alone our civilization will be saved from its present crisis. And this is, perhaps, why the mist of doubts and misunderstandings, that almost obscured the right path, has been removed in our days by the spiritual flood-light of Shri Ramakrishna's life.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE ANCIENT INDIAN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION*

By Prof. Hem Chandra Ray Chaudhuri, M.A., Ph.D.

Every civilized nation of the world has its own distinct type of polity. The factors determining the social and socio-political organization are, however, not the same in all lands. We find one set of principles behind the division of the Babylonians into the *Awilum* (noble), the *Mushkenum* (humbler folk), and the slave; another accounts for the classification of Iranians into *Athravas* (priests), *Rathaesthas* (warriors), etc. A third set of ideas is at the bottom of the distinction in Athens between Eupatrids (nobles), the Geomori (husbandmen), and the Demiurgi (artisans). We may also refer to the division of the early Romans into Patricians and Plebs.

The classification of Indians who follow the Hindu discipline is said to rest on *varna* and *jâti*, colour and birth. *Varna* or colour, in the sense of a pigment of the skin or ethnic origin, was undoubtedly a factor of primary importance in the early Vedic polity. Mention may be made in this connection of the distinction between the fair complexioned (*Shvitnya*)[1] Aryans and the dark-skinned aboriginals called *Dâsa* or *Dasyu*. The high-blown Aryan of the *Rigveda*, probably the earliest literary monument of the Indo-Aryans, never forgets that his own colour is distinct from that of the *Dâsa*.[2] Other distinctions are also alluded to. The *Dâsa-Dasyus* are 'noseless' (*anâsa*) and of 'hostile speech'. They have little faith in Aryan gods and sacrifices, and were probably worshippers of the phallus.[3] Divergences of mythology and mode of worship are frequently adverted to.[4]

It is clear that we have here a division of the people into two broad groups on the basis of ethnic and, at the same time, of cultural differences. As a result, however, of assimilation through inter-marriage with peoples outside the Vedic pale, and other processes, a number of blue-blooded Aryans must have in course of time lost their original complexion, and thus the old distinction of the people into the *Ârya-varna* and the *Dâsa-varna* gradually lost its primary significance. Moreover, the word *varna* soon came to be applied to four, instead of two, social groups. This was the direction towards which ancient Indian society was moving in the period represented by the later Vedic texts. Treatises like the *Shatapatha Brâhmana*[5] distinctly refer to

* Based on a lecture delivered at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture on 21 August 1948.

[1] *Ved. Ind.*, I. 356.

[2] I. 104. 2 ; III. 34. 9.

[3] Cf. VII. 21. 5 ; X. 99. 3.

[4] I. 33. 4-5 ; IV. 16. 9 ; V. 7. 10 ; 42. 9 ; VIII. 70. 10 ; X. 22. 7-8 ; etc.

[5] V. 5. 4. 9 ; VI. 4. 4. 13 ; cf ; *Ved. Ind.*, II, p. 247.

chatvâro varnâh or the four 'colours', i.e., social classes or grades. These *varnas* are usually mentioned as (a) *Brahman*, Brâhmana, or *Deva;* (b) *Râjan*, *Râjanya*, or Kshatriya; (c) Vaishya or Arya; and (d) Shudra, roughly answering, perhaps, to the *Chandâla* of the *Chhândogya Upanishad*[6] and the *Dâsa-Dasyu* of earlier texts. But the relative precedence of the four grades was rather indeterminate in the early period. The *Atharva Veda*[7] and the *Vâjasaneyi Samhitâ*[8] of the *Yajurveda*, while speaking of the four classes, gives the Shudra the third place in the order of enumeration, and the Arya or Vaishya the fourth. The *Maitrâyani Samhitâ*[9] places the Vaishya before the *Râjanya*. The *Shatapatha Brâhmana*[10] distinctly speaks of the superiority of the Kshatriya over all other classes, *tasmât kshatrât param nâsti*. That the *chaturvarna* system, as distinguished from the older two-fold division into Âryas and *Dâsa-Dasyus*, did not entirely rest on *birth* seems to be proved by such Vedic stories as that of the sage Kavasha who apparently ranked as a *Brâhmana*, but was alleged to have been born of a *Dâsi* or *Dâsa* woman.[11] A famous *Rigvedic*[12] poet-sage (Kâru) had for his parents, or, according to another interpretation, children, a physician (*bhishak*) and a grinder of corn (*upala-prakshini*). The lady mentioned last appears at any rate to have pursued an occupation fit for plebeians. According to the *Shatapatha Brâhmana*[13] King Janaka who belonged to the *Râjanya-Kshatra* class became a Brâhmana by virtue of his superior knowledge. The same *Brâhmana*[14] adds that some of the king's ministers were Shudras.

The case of Kavasha Ailusha clearly suggests that admixture of Aryan and non-Aryan elements was not unknown in later Vedic society. It is, therefore, clear that social divisions (*chaturvarna*) at this period cannot be explained simply in terms of pure ethnic extraction. Some Vedic texts attempt a distinction between the white (*shukla*) Brâhmana and Vaishya, and the swarthy (*dhumra*) and dark *Râjanya* and Shudra.[15] The point of difference is emphasized by reference to the contrast presented by day and night. The authors in question must have noticed men and women lacking the Aryan 'colour' not only in the Shudras but even in the aristocratic *Râjanya* class. One is reminded of the complexion of epic heroes and heroines, Râma, Krishna-Vâsudeva, Arjuna, and Draupadi-Krishnâ.

Diversity of 'colour' did not moreover blind the eyes of the Vedic sages to a proper appreciation of the underlying unity of the social organism, nay of the whole Universe. In the domain of religion and philosophy, the many gods were being synthesized into one supreme reality (cf. 'To what is One, the poets give many a name,' 'That One alone breathed,' 'Brahman is all,' *sarvam khalvidam Brahma*).[16] In a similar way the conception of an ultimate unity that absorbed the manifoldness of the social structure, makes its appearance as early as the tenth *mandala* of the *Rigveda*. In the *Purushasukta*, all the four social classes are represented as having their origin and being in the same *Purusha*. 'The Brâhmana was his mouth; the *Râjanya* was made his arms; the Vaishya constituted his thighs; the Shûdra sprang from his feet.' The account, as already pointed out by several scholars, bears on its face the stamp of allegory.

[6] V. 10. 7.
[7] XIX. 32. 8.
[8] XXVI. 2 ; cf. *Ved. Ind.*, II. 252 for other references.
[9] IV. 4. 9 ; cf. *Ved. Ind.*, II. 252.
[10] XIV. 4. 2. 23.
[11] Cf. the case of the dark-complexioned sage (Krishna) Dvaipâyana Vyâsa born of a fishermaid according to the *Mahâbhârata*.
[12] IX. 112. 3.
[13] XI. 6. 2. 10 ; cf. *Ved. Ind.*, II. 262.
[14] V. 3. 2. 2 ; *Ved. Ind.*, II. 390.
[15] Cf. *Ved. Ind.*, II. 247.
[16] *Rig*. I. 164. 46 ; X. 129 ; *Chhândogya Upanishad*, III. 14. 1.

The Brâhmana exercised his vocal organ in chanting hymns, the *Râjanya,* employed his strong arms in defending his country and people; the tillers and traders, Vaishyas, were the mainstay of society as the thighs are of the human body; the Shudras had to make large use of their feet for a due performance of their plebeian duties. The connection of the Shudra with the feet of the Supreme One need not by itself imply any social inferiority. The medieval Shudra kings of the Andhra country point out that the sanctifying stream of the Ganges springs, like people of their own caste, from the lotus-feet of Shauri, i.e., Vishnu the Supreme Being.[17] The most significant fact in the *Purushasukta* is the absence of any reference to tegumental or ethnic difference as the basis of the classification of society. Members of the four social grades are represented as integral parts of the same organism, albeit with different functions. Thus we have in the famous hymn, which is the Magna Charta of the Hindu social polity, recognition of the organic unity of society with implied functional differences. It has been rightly pointed out by scholars in connection with a few other hymns that the word Brâhmana at times suggests something peculiar to the *individual* and denotes a person *distinguished for genius or virtue*[18] or *elevated by special characteristics to receive the gift of inspiration.*[19]

As centuries rolled by, a large number of occupational or professional groups formed within the bosom of society. From ages past people in this country have shown a marked tendency to follow the traditional calling of their forbears. Many members of the occupational groups preferred the ancestral avocation. This tendency, together with other factors such as the admission into the Brahminical polity of new tribes and clans, sometimes from well-defined geographical areas, with their own ideas about *mana* ('a power and influence, not physical, and in a way supernatural'), and rules regarding connubium and commensality, may have been responsible for the wide vogue, side by side with *varna,* of the important word *jâti* which primarily meant 'birth', but later, by an extension of the sense, also a social group the membership of which was supposed to be based on *birth.* With the gradual crystallization of such groups into exclusive and inelastic units to which the designation *caste* properly applies, the importance of *birth* as the main determining factor in social classification was recognized by a notable fraternity of law givers and publicists. The institution styled *varna* at times comprised several such *jâtis* or castes.[20] It was not unnatural for jurists of the type mentioned above, to attribute to the bigger social unit (viz, the *varna*) characteristics of the *jâtis* of which it was believed to be an agglomeration. Soon the two concepts of *varna* and *jâti* got confused, and the terms came sometimes to be used synonymously.

There were, however, leaders of thought who viewed matters from a different angle. They pointed to a special import of the fourfold social division (*chaturvarna*), as distinguished, on the one hand, from the dualism of the early Vedic period and, on the other, from the new organization of infinitesimal birth-groups or *jâtis.* According to them, the *chaturvarna* system had absolutely nothing to do with *jâti* or birth, but was broad-based on character and conduct.

In post-Vedic literature, especially in the epics, two currents of thought—one basing social distinction on birth, the other on *vritta* (conduct)—are found running in parallel streams. The theory of the first group of writers which holds

[17]Cf. तत्र चतुर्थो वर्णः शौरेः पादपद्मसंभवो जयति ।
यस्य सहजा स्रवन्ती त्रिभिः प्रवाहैः पुनाति
भुवनानि ॥ (*Ep. Ind.* III. 64).

[18] X. 107. 6.

[19] X. 125. 5.

[20] *Manu,* X, 43.

the field in large measure even in our own times, and is represented in such epic passages as *yena jâtah sa eva sah*[21], is too well known to need any elaboration. But even to this school, birth implied by the expressions *jâti* and *janman* does not in all cases refer only to a physical fact, but has sometimes a cultural and spiritual significance, as is clearly suggested by the use of the word *dvija*, which points to a second (non-material) birth, and the term *santati*, spiritual offspring. It may further be noted that social status claimed on the basis of birth alone was not held in any great esteem as the disparaging expressions *Brahma-bandhu*, *Râjanya-bandhu* and *Kshatra-bandhu*[22] very clearly suggest.

The exponents of a higher thought never forgot the essential evenness and unity of society. They based social status not on the accident of birth but on the spiritual quality and activities of man and boldly proclaimed the truth that 'there is nothing nobler than man' (*guhyam Brahma tadidam vo bravimi na mânushâchchhreshthhataram hi kinchit*).[23]

The sense in which the epics understood the term *varna*, presents interesting features. The colours of the Brâhmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra is said to have been white, red, yellow, and black respectively. But it is emphasized that there is no essential difference (*vishesha*) amongst the *varnas*, as originally all men were Brâhmanas or emanations from Brahman. They were, however, grouped into grades according to complexion based on character and conduct. The idea is said to be that the physical complexion of a man is conditioned by his spiritual nature and deeds.

ब्राह्मणानां सितो वर्णः क्षत्रियाणां तु लोहितः ।
वैश्यानां पीतको वर्णः शूद्राणामसितस्तथा ॥

न विशेषोऽस्ति वर्णानां सर्वं ब्राह्ममिदं जगत् ।
ब्रह्मणा पूर्वसृष्टं हि कर्मभिर्वर्णतां गतम् ॥
कामभोगप्रियास्तीक्ष्णाः क्रोधनाः प्रियसाहसाः ।
त्यक्तस्वधर्मा रक्तांगास्ते द्विजाः क्षत्रतां गताः ॥
गोभ्यो वृत्तिं समास्थाय पीताः कृष्युपजीविनः ।
स्वधर्मान्नानुतिष्ठन्ति ते द्विजा वैश्यतां गताः ॥
हिंसानृतप्रिया लुब्धाः सर्वकर्मोपजीविनः ।
कृष्णाः शौचपरिभ्रष्टास्ते द्विजाः शूद्रतां गताः ॥
इत्येतैः कर्मभिर्व्यस्ता द्विजा वर्णान्तरं गताः ॥ etc.[24]

Nilakantha says,

सितः स्वच्छः सत्त्वगुणः प्रकाशात्मा शमदमादिस्वभावः । लोहितो रजोगुणः प्रवृत्त्यात्मा शौर्यतेजआदिस्वभावः । पीतको रजस्तमोभ्यामिश्रः कृष्यादिहीनकर्मप्रवर्तकः । असितः कृष्ण आवरणात्मा तमोगुणः स्वतः प्रकाशप्रवृत्तिहीनः शकटवत् परप्रेर्यः ॥

It is to be noted that the above theory not only discards the question of birth as the basis of the division into *varnas*, but actually points to the identity of origin of all the four *varnas*.

In the *Shrimadbhagavadgitâ-parvâdhyâya*[25] of the *Mahâbhârata*, Vâsudeva-Krishna says in very clear terms that the classification of the people into four *varnas* is based on *guna-karma*, i.e., spiritual quality and conduct. In another context[26] the god Shiva is represented as quoting a saying of Lord Brahman which declares:

एभिस्तु कर्मभिर्देवि शुभैराचरितैस्तथा ।
शूद्रो ब्राह्मणतां याति वैश्यः क्षत्रियतां व्रजेत् ॥

* * *

कर्मभिः शुचिभिर्देवि शुद्धात्मा विजितेन्द्रियः ।
शूद्रोऽपि द्विजवत् सेव्य इति ब्रह्माब्रवीत् स्वयम् ॥

* * *

न योनिर्नापि संस्कारो न श्रुतं न च संततिः ।
कारणानि द्विजत्वस्य वृत्तमेव तु कारणम् ॥
सर्वोऽयं ब्राह्मणो लोके वृत्तेन तु विधीयते ।
वृत्ते स्थितस्तु शूद्रोऽपि ब्राह्मणत्वं नियच्छति ॥

* * *

[21] *Mbh.*, XII. 296. 3.
[22] Cf. *Ved. Ind.*, II. 116 ; *Chhâ. Up.*, V. 35 ; Pargiter, *D. K. Age*, p: 22.
[23] *Mbh.*, XII. 299. 20 ; cf. Homo sum ; humani nil a me alienum puto (Terence).
[24] *Mbh.*, XII. 188. 5, 10-14 (with Nilakantha's commentary).
[25] Ch. III. 18.
[26] *Mbh.*, XIII. 143, 26, 48, 50-51, 59.

एतत्ते गुह्यमाख्यातं यथा शूद्रो भवेद्द्विजः ।
ब्राह्मणो वा च्युतो धर्माद्यथा शूद्रत्वमाप्नुते ॥[27]

The verses quoted above go definitely to prove that, according to a very important school of thought, the *chaturvarna* system was not based on birth, performance of rites and ceremonies, sacred knowledge or spiritual succession[28], but exclusively on *vritta* or conduct. ABrâhmana might be degraded to the status of a Shudra and a Shudra might be elevated to that of a Brâmana by following particular modes of social behaviour. The words attributed to Vâsudeva (Vishnu), Shiva, and Brahman, the three manifestations of the Supreme Spirit according to Hindu belief, cannot be regarded as less binding than the opinion and *obiter dicta* of law givers and jurists of less exalted rank. Similar passages regarding conduct as the basis of the *varna* division are found in different parts of the *Mahâbhârata*.[29]

Cf. सत्यं दानं क्षमा शीलमानृशंस्यं तपोऽघृणा ।
दृश्यते यत्र नागेन्द्र स ब्राह्मण इति स्मृतः ॥

* * *

शूद्रे तु यद्भवेल्लक्ष्म द्विजे तच्च न विद्यते ।
न वै शूद्रो भवेच्छूद्रो ब्राह्मणो न च ब्राह्मणः ॥
यत्रैतल्लक्ष्यते सर्प वृत्तं स ब्राह्मणः स्मृतः ।
यत्रैतन्न भवेत् सर्प तं शूद्रमिति निर्दिशेत् ॥

* * *

कृतकृत्याः पुनर्वर्णा यदि वृत्तं न विद्यते ।

Nilakantha rightly points out:

शूद्रोऽपि शमाद्युपेतो ब्राह्मण एव ब्राह्मणोऽपि कामाद्युपेतः शूद्र एवेत्यर्थः ।

But the learned commentator's interpretation of the word *vritta* as *vaidika-samskâra* is rendered implausible by the great epic itself[30] where *vritta* is clearly distinguished from *samskâra*, which includes *vaidika-samskâra*. The reference to *vritta* in connection with Shudras who were precluded from the performance of Vedic rites, excludes the possibility of its meaning Vedic *samskâra*. While commenting on *Mbh.*, XII. 189. 8., Nilakantha further says:

धर्म एव वर्णविभागे कारणं न जातिरित्यर्थः—

'righteousness and not birth is at the root of the *varna* division.' The views attributed to the Trinity in the Gita and the *Shântiparvan* receive a striking confirmation from the *Vanaparvan*. According to this Book,[31] the gods accept as Brâhmanas only those persons who possess the requisite spiritual quality. (Cf. यः क्रोधमोहौ त्यजति तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुः, etc.). The *Mahâbhârata*[32] actually refers to a number of personages such as Ârshtishena, Sindhudvipa, Devâpi, and Vishvâmitra who were originally not Brâhmanas, but were elevated to Brâhmanahood on account of their spiritual worth.

Cf. यत्रार्ष्टिषेणः कौरव्य ब्राह्मण्यं संशितव्रतः ।
तपसा महता राजन् प्राप्तवान् ऋषिसत्तमः ॥
सिन्धुद्वीपश्च राजर्षिर्देवापिश्च महातपाः ।
ब्राह्मण्यं लब्धवान् यत्र विश्वामित्रस्तथा मुनिः ॥

The possibility of a change of *varna* is also recognized by the supplement to the *Mahâbhârata* known as the *Harivamsha*:

नाभागरिष्टपुत्रौ द्वौ वैश्यौ ब्राह्मणतां गतौ ।[33]

Even the *Manusamhitâ* which, in several passages, prescribes a more or less rigid system of caste based on birth, cannot altogether ignore the importance of *vritta* or *guna-karma*. It is clearly stated in this work[34] that a Brâhmana becomes a Shudra by following a particular course of action. It is added that

[27] Cf, *Manu*, IV. 245: ब्राह्मणः श्रेष्ठतामेति प्रत्यवायेन शूद्रताम् ।
and IX. 335. शुचिरुत्कृष्टशुश्रूषुर्मृदुवागनहंकृतः ।
ब्राह्मणाद्याश्रयो नित्यमुत्कृष्टां जातिमश्नुते ॥

[28] Cf. *Ep. Ind.*, V. 280.

[29] Cf. III. 180. 21, 25-26, 86.

[30] XIII. 143. 50-51.

[31] Ch. 205. 33-38.

[32] IX. 39. 34-35.

[33] Verse 658 ; *var. lect.*

[34] *Manu*, Ch. IV, 245. (Bangavâsi edition, X. 80). नाभागरिष्टपुत्राश्च क्षत्रिया वैश्यतां गताः

the son of a Brâhmana is not a Brâhmana simply by virtue of his birth. If he is negligent of his duties, he is no more than a *vrâtya*, one fallen in social status.

The following verses, also, deserve notice:

शूद्रायां ब्राह्मणाज्जातः श्रेयसा चेत् प्रजायते ।
अश्रेयान् श्रेयसीं जातिं गच्छत्यासप्तमाद् युगात् ॥
शूद्रो ब्राह्मणतामेति ब्राह्मणश्चैति शूद्रताम् ।
क्षत्रियाज्जातमेवन्तु विद्याद्वैश्यात्तथैव च ॥[35]

The *Manusamhitâ*[36] further describes how various tribes and clans (*jâtayah*) belonging to the Kshatriya *varna* were gradually degraded to the status of *Vrishalas*, deviators from approved social conduct, as a result of their neglect of prescribed duties. It is to be noted that we have in this context reference to a plurality of *jâtis* included within the same *varna*, thus pointing to the difference between the two concepts, *jâti* and *varna*. The social status conferred by *varna* might be changed, even according to this prince of law givers, through neglect of duties of a particular character.

It may be added that certain authorities regarded devotion to God as the principal factor that counted in determining the social position of man. According to this view, even barbarians and outcasts were worthy of honour if only they were devoted to the Lord. The *Svargakhanda*[37] of the *Padmapurâna* has the following verses:

वैष्णवो वर्णबाह्योऽपि पुनाति भुवनत्रयम् ॥

* * *

पुक्कशः श्वपचो वाऽपि ये चान्ये म्लेच्छजातयः ।
तेऽपि वन्द्या महाभागा हरिपादैकसेवकाः ॥

The liberal thought of the *Mahâbhârata* finds support in certain passages of the sister epic. There was no bar to the attainment of the status of a *maharshi* for a man even of mixed Vaishya-Shudra extraction. To this category belonged the son of the blind sage who figures in one of the most tragic episodes of the *Râmâyana*. He is represented as versed in the *shâstras* though born of a Shudra mother and Vaishya father: शूद्रायामस्मि वैश्येन जातो नरवराधिप ।[38] Guha who was a Nishâda is described as a *Râjan* and is treated as a *confrere* by prince Râma sprung from one of the proudest of the Kshatriya lines.[39] Shabari, doubtless belonging to a tribe branded as *Dasyu* in the *Aitareya Brâhmana*, is not only called *siddhâ*, *tapodhanâ*, and *tâpasi*, but is allowed to touch the feet of Râma and offer him *âchamaniya* and food.[40] The above sections of the *Râmâyana* breathe an atmosphere that offers a striking contrast to that of the story of Shambuka as given in the supplementary book, doubtless of a later age, styled the *uttarakânda*. Here we find a Shudra forfeiting his life for the offence of performing penances. It is further stated that in the *Tretâ* age only Brâhmanas and Kshatriyas could become *tapasvins*, not Vaishyas and Shudras.

In recalling the story of the martyred child-sage of Vaishya-Shudra extraction, it may not be out of place to say a few words about the social concept, *varnasankara*. People coming under that category were usually regarded with disapproval. The term is often taken to mean the offspring of a mixed marriage. But it should be noted that mixed marriage when sanctioned by law and usage cannot fairly be included among the three causes specially mentioned by Manu[41] as giving rise to the *varnasankara*, viz, *vyabhichâra* or illicit intercourse, *avedyâ-vedana* or marrying a girl in violation of law (e.g., incest hinted at in the *Rigvedic* story of Yama and Yami and the tale of the Sâkyas in Buddhist literature), and

[35] *Manu*, X. 64-65.
[36] IX. 43.
[37] Bangavâsi edition, XV. 152; XXIV. 11.

[38] *Râmâyana*, II. 63. 51; 64. 1 and 32.
[39] *Râm.* 50. 32 and 36.
[40] *Râm.* III. 74. 6-7, 18.
[41] X. 24.

svakarma-tyâga or neglect of one's appointed duties.

Cf. व्यभिचारेण वर्णानामवेद्यावेदनेन च।

स्वकर्मणां च त्यागेन जायन्ते वर्णसंकराः॥

The Gita[42] also emphasizes the ethical aspect of the matter in the passage—

स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्णेय जायते वर्णसंकरः॥

Varna-sankara in reality suggests social anarchy, as *mâtsyanyâya* connotes political chaos. The concept should not be confounded with that underlying inter-caste or inter-tribal marriage sanctioned by law or usage. Gautamiputra Shâtakarni, emperor of the Deccan, who claims to have been a Brâhmana and a ruler who put an end to *varna-sankara*, is known to have had matrimonial relationship with the Sakas of Western India.

To conclude, the higher thought of the country meant the *varna* system of ancient India to be a code of social and socio-ethical discipline. Its basis according to this view was *guna-karma* or *vritta*, spiritual quality and conduct, and not mere birth or ceremonial correctitude.

A man born in a higher caste could be degraded even to the status of a Shudra when his unrighteous acts demanded this punishment. Similarly a man born in a lower caste was raised through his virtues to a higher social status. That flexible code of social discipline which brought unity out of diversity, tended to degenerate in the hands of certain writers into a watertight set of rules based on birth and not character and conduct, thus sapping the dynamic force of Indian society and reducing it to a stagnant state.[43]

It is wrong to invoke the authority of the *Mânava Dharmashâstra* as the last word in social matters, as there were other authorities of equal or even greater weight whose point of view was different. 'There is nothing nobler than *Mânusha*', whatever may be his birth or rank. This sums up the higher thought of India.

[42] I. 40.

[43] Summary in *Modern Review*, Sept. 1943, p. 174.

RELIGION AND COLLECTIVE ECONOMIC LIBERATION

By Prof. Govinda Chandra Dev, M.A.

We are prone to believe that there is a necessary conflict between religion and the theory of collective economic liberation. This incompatibility is generally supposed to be so extreme that any effort at an adjustment of the claims of the two appears more often than not to be foredoomed to disappointment. Nevertheless, in the present paper, an attempt has been made to show how religion as a consciousness of spiritual identity of the universe can leave scope for collective economic liberation. In this connection, I beg to draw the attention of the reader to my paper *Consciousness of Identity in Collective Life* published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* of last December. From a logical standpoint, the present study is the legitimate corollary of the analysis of religion made in that paper.

Pseudo-religious Character of Objections against Collective Realization of Empirical Values

It is useless, even if it be desirable, to emphasize the importance of the spiritual interest of mankind over and above their material interest, because the spiritual urge in its explicit form is a very rare phenomenon. An exclusive emphasis upon spiritual interest in collective life might be very effective as a diplomatic gospel, but being based on an entirely mistaken reading of human psychology, it will never be a workable

theory and must give rise to interminable troubles. If it is true to say that man does not live for bread alone, it is completely false to say that he can live without it. Yet, curiously enough, pseudo-advocates of religion attempt to appease the hungry by an appeal to spirit. Thus, they add lie to injury.

Spiritual interest being the concern of the negligible few and the material interest a collective concern, no reasonable exception can be taken on any moral, religious, or psychological grounds to the demand for a legitimate distribution of wealth and all that it implies on a collective scale. There is possibly no Jacob's ladder connecting the throne of God in heaven with an exclusive reservation of the material comforts for the privileged few. Vested interest does not seem to possess any necessary angelic halo round it. Rightly understood, the demand for an equitable distribution of wealth is not only not irreligious but in the light of a legitimate exposition of the notion of spiritual identity of the universe furthers the cause of real religion. If Christ was right in emphasizing the need of renouncing wealth and all that is associated with it for taking up the cross, if 'it is' really 'easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven', interest in spirituality is not only not inconsistent with a collective distribution of wealth but it also contributes considerably to the same.

Again, material values being the dominant concern of the vast majority, it is quite natural that they would play a prominent role in human history, in the formation of man's aspirations and ideals. So an economic interpretation of history is to a great extent acceptable and no exception need be taken to it on the ground of religion. Religion has nothing to get from a rejection of the obvious role of matter in man's life even though it holds good that it is necessarily opposed to realization of material values. But if it can be demonstrated, in addition, that it is compatible with the collective realization of material values, as I think it is, even this apprehension becomes nullified.

It is also asserted at times that the doctrine of collective economic distribution wants to kill all differences and as such attempts the impossible. If it is possible for the doctrine to kill all differences on the economic plane, at least, religion has nothing to fear from this since the last word of man's spiritual realization seems to be the recognition of identity which has rightly been interpreted by the author of the Gita as an awareness of equality (*samatva*): it is a consciousness of the same reality in the midst of empirical differences constituted by the high and the low. As a matter of fact, none need be afraid of a levelling-down of all differences and a consequent transformation of plurality into a colourless unity. Nature, as she stands, is for differences, for inequalities and any betterment of human society in any phase must fight against this cruel decree of Nature and contribute to a consoling sense of unity in the midst of diversity. This unity takes in the spiritual plane the shape of a supra-logical intuition of identity and its counterpart in the material plane is a social structure that leaves full scope for collective economic security. As a matter of fact, collective economic liberation does not seem to stand for absolute economic equality; it is, rightly understood, a conception of class-less society, a society without either any privileged class or any trustees to look after the vast majority; and its ultimate aim is to supply to each man, according to his needs, the material comforts of life, thereby leaving adequate scope for his higher ideational growth, consistently with his own instinctive bent, but never in conflict with the collective security.

If religion can tolerate, more appropriately, submit to a benevolent patriarchal monarchy, it is inconceivable why it should nauseate at a conception of State which does not leave the collective interest to the mercy of

a particular individual or a group of individuals (which in this world of change is after all an inconstant quantity) but makes each man responsible for his own welfare. With proper educational facilities, perhaps, I can look to my own interest in a much better manner than all the Ashokas and Akbars, Solomons and Charlemagnes ever born can possibly do. If *Râmarâjya* is superior to autocracy, self-government is incomparably and infinitely greater than any *Râmarâjya* whatsoever. It is an unjustifiable pride, apparently immoral and unspiritual in character, which, because of the empirical differences on the surface, ignores the hidden unity of spirit behind all and arrogates on the basis of this false premise the right of permanent guardianship of the vast majority. Spiritual pride is the greatest possible contradiction in terms, and this lurks behind the so-called notion of mercy which in the absence of a better ideal is undoubtedly quite welcome but nevertheless in the light of a more penetrating entrance into the spiritual possibilities of mankind must be substituted by a superior notion. And this implies a readiness to part with power and not an assumption of other's responsibility on an exaggerated estimation of one's own limited self. Consequently, it appears that on whatever other considerations the notion of permanent trusteeship be justifiable, it is farthest, at least, from a spiritual outlook.

Inadequacy of Communism in its Purely Philosophical Aspect

But yet it is difficult to share official communism in its philosophical implications. It is not very easy to discover any plausible logical connection between a materialistic interpretation of history on the one hand and an emphasis upon a balanced distribution of wealth and the demand for a class-less society on the other. If the proposed economic standard is consistent with a spiritualistic metaphysics, communism cannot claim to be the inevitable corollary to its own particular conception of reality. A class-less society can be demanded on purely psychological considerations irrespective of any metaphysics whatsoever, since the instinct of hunger is not the exclusive possession of any particular section of humanity. Consequently it seems that the metaphysical duel that the communist invites by advancing a conception of reality rather hampers its practical interest: it would be better for a communist to practise under the circumstances a spirit of silence, if not indifference, to metaphysics just as Buddha and Socrates did. It might be objected to on behalf of communism that if it has at all any metaphysics, it is solely constituted by an unqualified hostility to the same as a study of the supra-sensible. But in that case, communism, on its metaphysical side, is no better than empiricism pure and simple. If dialectical materialism is a bare statement of facts of history and a merely empirical analysis of them, it is, then, no philosophical specification of reality but merely supplies data for the same. An economic interpretation of history is acceptable as an indisputable specification of relevant facts of history, but if it claims to be a system of philosophy, as it at times does, despite its obvious hostility to metaphysics, it has then to be evaluated as a dialectical construction of thought, and, as such, its speculative worth must be estimated in the light of the fundamental intellectual standard. As a speculative construction, it draws its inspiration from Hegel's dialectic with its notion of a logical synthesis of opposites. Leaving aside the Hegelian Absolute and confining its attention solely to empirical facts of history, communism claims to have formulated a philosophy out of them on the basis of the aforesaid principle of synthesis. The absurdity of the notion of such a synthesis as a logical construction is quite obvious: on the strength of the discovery of contradictions in fact, it cannot be maintained that they constitute a synthesis of discrepancies.

The question of a synthesis of opposites comes in only when the highest demand of logic is fulfilled in the supra-logical intuition and yet, side by side, experience with its plurality presses its claim in the scheme of reality. The synthesis of opposites, rightly understood, constitutes the highest phase of philosophy, viz, the synthesis of reason and through that of supra-logical intuition with experience of plurality. Hegel utilizes the notion in restricting the operation of intellect, and Marxism claims to base its philosophy upon this unproved assumption. Yet, in a sense, Marxism is more logical than Hegelian dialectic, since consistently with the thesis of a discovery of opposites in the field of experience, which it confuses with a synthesis of opposites, it confines itself to the empirical sphere and does not ideally superimpose the absolute as a pure thought-construct upon this empirical heap of discrepancies.

The unqualified antipathy of Marxism to idealism as such, is also traceable to its allegiance to Hegel. In Hegel and most of his followers, the concept of the whole differs from empirical particulars merely in degree. In consequence, they reduce, consciously or unconsciously, their absolute into an extended edition of the empirical particulars, and this amounts with different degrees to an idealization of the real. This leaves little scope for a practical use of philosophy. Hegel exhibits this by his metaphorical suggestion that the owl of Minerva takes its flight when the twilight shade has already fallen, i.e., philosophy, in going to make the world straight, finds that it is already so. This has led Hegel to justify the existing order, the climax of which is traceable in his deification of the Prussian State. Starting with the premise that Hegel is the specimen of idealism at its best, Marx, annoyed at his idealization of the real, is led to hold that any effort at the betterment of society is incompatible with idealism. But this reading of idealism cannot hold good with reference to absolutism in so far as it holds that the difference between the world as a whole and the empirical particulars is mainly qualitative. This is definitely the note of Spinoza and the concrete absolutists of the East and, to a considerable extent, it seems to be true of Bradley and Bosanquet. And owing to a clear demarcation of appearance from reality in it, the same remark applies with a greater force to Vedantic idealism. The unambiguous emphasis of representative idealism of the West in Plato[1] upon the necessity of a realization of the ideal, leaves little scope for the apprehension of Marx. It might have been correct to observe that idealism is after the realization of an archetypal ideal whereas communism has before it an echtypal one, that idealism is interested in a retrospective evolution whereas communism in a prospective march. But even this much cannot be said against idealism, if it is maintained, as it should be, that the ideal of identity, despite its archetypal character as a metaphysical reality, is from the individual standpoint an emergent to be brought into existence. The notion of identity being consistent with plurality, the ideal, in so far as the ever-realized character of identity is concerned, is archetypal but with reference to plurality of experiencing centres, it is echtypal. These considerations, perhaps, prove beyond doubt that there is no necessary hostility between idealism as such and communism as an economic theory.

Synthesis of the Notion of Identity with Communism in its Economic Aspect

In the light of a proper orientation of the metaphysical notion of identity and its bearing upon collective life, communism, with all that is really important in it, can, perhaps, be assimi-

[1] The controversy as to whether Plato is an idealist in a technical sense is immaterial, since from the standpoint of Marxism, the conceptions of an all-inclusive spiritual whole and a world of forms are alike ideal structures, leaving scope for no progress.

lated most effectively into the body of idealism. Idealism, properly understood, is not afraid of matter but of an idealization of it without the transcendent awareness of its identity with spirit as the fundamental stuff of reality. In fact, what is matter empirically, is spirit from the standpoint of intellect which is finding its fulfilment in a supra-logical apprehension; and what is mobility from the purely empirical perspective, is the ever-real stability from the logico-extra-logical angle of vision. Judged in this light what is, from one standpoint the expression of a natural need, is, viewed from another, the expression of a supernatural urge. The materialistic interpretation of history (with its exclusive emphasis upon change and the dialectic evolved out of it) being a reading of reality from the empirical standpoint in its most widened shape, is only a sectional study which a synthetic idealism, demanding a harmony of reason and experience, can easily assimilate. Due to its loyalty to experience, despite its rigorous adherence to a transcendence of the same in the extralogical intuition, such idealism does not ignore the empirical differences as trivial. Its thesis, on the contrary, is the effacement of empirical differences as far as practicable in the light of the metaphysical identity intuited. In the divine, there is a synthesis of the empirical plurality with the transcendent identity, and though it is from the cosmic standpoint of an archetypal character, yet, in the sphere of experience of the finite centres, it has to be effected. So the ideal of life is not a mere ascent of the individual to transcendental identity but it is also a persistent effort for a descent of the same into the empirical sphere. So awareness of the transcendent, spiritual identity and equality should inevitably lead to a realization of the same in the material, psychological, and vital spheres in the shape of a social structure discouraging differences discordant with the ultimate identity. Highest idealism as the recognition of the identity of spirit, is consequently quite consistent with a materialistic reading of the universe from a purely empirical standpoint in so far as it aspires after a healthy adjustment of empirical differences. So the future of humanity seems to lie in a *rapprochement* of the most exalted idealism, as the recognition of pure identity as the ultimate reality, with the most dignified materialism demanding economic equality, in the communist's understanding of religion in the true sense and in the religionist's understanding of communism and its spiritual implications; perhaps more in the latter than in the former because of the obvious urgency of the material needs of the vast majority without the satisfaction of which no idealistic inspiration can really be roused in them. This much-needed synthesis would serve religion by fostering a true sense of objective imperfection in those who are fit for spiritual culture; and it would also serve the cause of economic distribution, since in the absence of a group of absolutely disinterested persons, the distribution of wealth on an equitable basis would prove to be an impossibility.

Future of Organized Religion

Whether we believe that the identity of spirit is the reality behind plurality or not, experience ere long makes us conscious in varying degrees of an objective imperfection inherent in things; and consequently objective joy following, from possession of material comforts, cannot satisfy us. This demands an ideal satisfaction in imagination, and this is religion. Before actual realization of the highest truth in supra-logical intuition, this remains as the poetry of spirit in us. In fact, organized religion, on its bright side, is a social specification of this individual demand. So it would be short-sighted not to recognize the higher spiritual values of life in the name of communism. Being based on a deep-seated psychological basis, viz, a sense of inherent imperfection of things, it cannot be

undone; and any effort to the contrary would give rise to strife and defeat the very end that communism places before itself. It would be unfair to say that communism is necessarily opposed to such a private, personal, idealistic culture; but it is definitely indifferent to it. This attitude of indifference should systematically be overcome by an awareness of spiritual values of life, though it should never be superimposed upon the majority. The mistake of the past is to be avoided; but its lessons should not be forgotten. Even organized religion has to be tolerated with some reserve; though an urgent recognition of spiritual necessity is a rare phenomenon, yet some sort of experience of objective imperfection is more or less a common experience. As such, most men at some time or other feel in some degree the necessity of an ideal satisfaction in spirit, and this would be the function of organized religion. But it should never be utilized as a weapon for superimposition of spiritual values side by side with an underestimation of the empirical ones upon the collective life; and its general form must be made consistent with the demands of the time and the pressing needs of society. There can be nothing individual if it is not somewhere and somewhen social, and consequently practice of delight in spirit in individual life logically leaves scope for its collective use, if of course, proper individuals can be selected. So organized religion must change its shape, but nevertheless it must remain a reality. Again, if religion be treated, as it should be, as a promoter of the material interest of the vast majority in consonance with the spiritual interest of the minority, organized religion in its new shape should be allowed an all-absorbing role. On the basis of the idealistic scheme already suggested, it might fairly be observed that a spiritually inspired structure of collective economic distribution is what we should strive for as our ideal of the future.

Perpetuation of Differences in an Ideal Form

Spiritual values of life have in the past been invariably rewarded with material privileges, a procedure which has greatly hampered the spiritual interest by making it from the earthly standpoint a convenient gospel. Its disastrous consequence has been that those who required empirical values most, could enjoy it least. Consistently with the recognition of superior worth of spiritual values, a principle must be laid down that those who are superior must get the least material reward whereas those who are inferior should get the most of it. The weak should be allowed to enjoy life most in the material plane so that a sense of objective imperfection may speedily dawn on them. In keeping with the demand of spirit in man, and with his moral and religious sense, privileges of life in the lower plane must be reserved for the weak, the backward, whereas the more a man gives expression to his superior worth, the less should he get of material enjoyment and the more should he be allowed to live a life in spirit with the irreducible minimum of matter. The standard of superiority must not be material possession, but the capacity to reject it and to get it distributed absolutely in the interest of those who are at the lowest rung of the ladder. This is, perhaps, the sublimest form of perpetuation of differences without which life, it is said, cannot go on and not a callous deprivement of the weak and the low from the material comforts without which it is difficult for them to breathe. 'First shall be the last and the last shall be the first in the kingdom of heaven', as Christ cryptically puts it.

SCIENCE AND WAR

By Malcolm Subhan

In the lives of the peoples of India religion and art play a vital and integral part. Here have been born some of the world's greatest religious faiths; and here, too, men have contemplated on the infinite and searched for Truth for countless centuries. And, therefore, it is but natural that India should regard contemporary Western science with suspicion: religion and art are an expression of the emotional; science of the intellectual.

The civilization of the West is often considered a typical product of science. For over three hundred years science has been cultivated intensely in Europe and, more recently, in the United States and Canada. 'The result has been the rise of materialism, agnosticism, and anarchy of every sort,' claim those averse to science. But is science responsible for the deplorable state of affairs which exists in the West? Perhaps the world today would have been in very much the same stage it was in eight hundred years ago had man not stumbled on to science. But he did. The intellectual in him craved an explanation of everything that went on around him; the emotional attributed the mysteries of the universe to an all-powerful Being. And science satisfied the intellectual in him. Unfortunately, when man grasped the tremendous possibilities of science, he attempted building the longed-for Utopia on it. The men who created science out of the mass of data which presented itself before them, are not to be blamed for the chaotic condition of the world: *the fault lies rather in the masses, who failed to understand, and hence misinterpreted, science.*

It is often claimed that science is responsible for this war as well as the last. 'Science, by ruthlessly sacrificing the emotional to the intellectual, has reduced man to the stage where he has become an automaton, a complicated chemical structure governed by the laws of science. It has ridiculed the things of the spirit not amenable to it, and has regarded them as mere superstition. The result has been that with the affective parts of his mind suppressed by science, man has been forced to revert to wars and destruction.'

Yet there are several apparent flaws in this reasoning. Ever since the dawn of life on the face of the earth there has been ceaseless struggle for existence. In man there still is a trace of the animal, of this instinctive fight for life. Of course, he has attempted to hide it beneath an elaborate integument of culture. *But, because his economic system* is entirely unorganized, he lives in *constant fear of being eliminated altogether from the scheme of things.* And he indulges in wars because there is within him the vague idea that provided he can annihilate those whose hold on the economic system is stronger than his, he will be able to live in comparative peace and security.

George Santayana, the American philosopher, poet, and author, wrote:

> . . . For the glories of war are all blood-stained, delirious, and infected with crime; the combative instinct is a savage prompting by which one man's good is found in another's evil. The existence of such a contradiction in the moral world is the original sin of Nature whence flows every other wrong. He is a willing accomplice of that perversity in things who delights in another's discomfiture or in his own, and craves the blind tension of plunging into danger without reason, or the idiot's pleasure in facing a pure chance. To find joy in another's trouble is, as man is constituted, not unnatural, though it is wicked; and to find joy in one's own trouble, though it be madness, is not yet impossible for man. . .

While it is true that science, by creating a complex civilization, has destroyed any tendency to isolationism the differ-

ent nations of the world might have had, and has thus made the consequences of war more terrible and far-reaching, it is also true that science has thereby laid the foundations of an efficient economic system. The caveman of 2,000 B.C. had an economic system of the crudest and simplest type: he fought against his neighbours because he sensed dimly that for him it was a case of the survival of the fittest. But progress was inevitable. Hence we find that the civilizations of several centuries later possessed a religion far more refined than that of their ancestors and had a true appreciation of art and beauty. But the economic system had already caught them in its meshes. Due to the fact that the production and distribution of commodities was carried on in a comparatively haphazard manner, even as it is today, and also to the fact that life in some parts of the world is easier than in others, the nations were in a constant state of turmoil. All through the history of the world, before the days of the decline and fall of Rome, before there was such a thing as organized science, nation has been fighting nation in a mad attempt to retain its hold on the economic system. With the coming of science these futile struggles did not cease, for though science created a complex civilization, the situation as far as the production and distribution of goods went, remained practically unaltered.

'Then why has science failed to give the world an effective economic system?' Einstein, in his letter to posterity, gave the answer. *Because the intelligence and character of the masses are incomparably lower than the intelligence and character of the few who produce something valuable for the community, the result is wars, industrialism, mass production, communism, strikes, crime, and a host of isms.* Science can eliminate wars, but the emotional in man rebels against the methods it would have to employ to do so. *Given the* present economic system, wars are safety valves: the world can only make provisions for a certain number of people, and as during the course of the years of peace and prosperity the population increases, an already overburdened economic system cracks under the additional strain. Science can give the world an efficient economic system, but only when the intelligence of the masses is more highly developed will this be possible. Wars are an expression of the emotional: it is necessary that they be regarded intellectually if they are to be extirpated.

One of the charges frequently brought against science is that it is radically wrong for 'it quickens the intellect, while leaving the conative and the affective parts of the mind undeveloped'. It is true. But only partly so. During the centuries before science became known to man he relied to a great extent upon the affective part of his mind, with the result that he developed emotionally far more rapidly than intellectually. With the coming of science the reverse became true and the same state of affairs existed as before. However, now that man has realized that the cognitional and the emotional are both equally important, the adjustment of the balance will not long be delayed.

Those who believe science to be a specialized discipline calculated to breed narrowness and intolerance, err greatly. Breadth of vision is not sacrificed for depth of knowledge—rather depth of knowledge increases breadth of vision. A glance at the list of names of men of science will suffice to show that it is international: it is the masses who, because they fail to understand science, are responsible for the chaotic condition of the world.

Science has not failed. As yet the masses can but blunder on, for only through years of painful experience will they understand its message.

THE SPIRIT OF INDIAN CIVILIZATION

By Swami Vivekananda

Immortal India

The debt which the world owes to our motherland is immense. Taking country with country, there is not one race on this earth to which the world owes so much as to the patient Hindu, the mild Hindu. 'The mild Hindu' sometimes is used as an expression of reproach, but if ever a reproach concealed a wonderful truth it is in the term, 'the mild Hindu', who has always been the blessed child of God. Civilizations have arisen in other parts of the world. In ancient times and in modern times, great ideas have emanated from strong and great races. In ancient and modern times, wonderful ideas have been carried forward from one race to another. In ancient and modern times, seeds of great truth and power have been cast abroad by the advancing tides of national life, but mark you, my friends, it has been always with the blast of war trumpets, and with the march of embattled cohorts. Each idea had to be soaked in a deluge of blood; each idea had to wade through the blood of millions of our fellow-beings; each word of power had to be followed by the groans of millions, by the wails of orphans, by the tears of widows. This, in the main, other nations have taught; but India has for thousands of years peacefully existed. Here activity prevailed when even Greece did not exist, when Rome was not thought of, when the very fathers of the modern Europeans lived in the forests and painted themselves blue. Even earlier, when history has no record, and tradition dares not peep into the gloom of that intense past, even from then until now, ideas after ideas have marched out from her, but every word has been spoken with a blessing behind it and peace before it. We, of all nations of the world, have never been a conquering race, and that blessing is on our head; and, therefore, we live. There was a time when at the sound of the march of big, great battalions, the earth trembled. Vanished from off the face of the earth, with not even a tale left behind to tell, gone is that ancient land of the Greeks. There was a time when the Roman eagle floated over everything worth having in this world; everywhere Rome's power was felt and pressed on the head of humanity; the earth trembled at the name of Rome. But the Capitoline Hill is a mass of ruins, the spider weaves its web where the Caesars ruled. There have been other nations equally glorious that have come and gone, living a few hours of exultant and of exuberant dominance, and of a wicked national life, and then vanishing like ripples on the face of the waters. Thus have these nations made their mark on the face of humanity. But we live; and if Manu came back today he would not be bewildered, and would not find himself in a foreign land. The same laws are here, laws adjusted and thought out through thousands of years; customs, the outcome of the acumen of ages and the experience of centuries, that seem to be eternal; and as the days go by, as blow after blow of misfortune has been delivered upon them, they seem to have served one purpose only, that of making them stronger and more constant. And to find the centre of all this, the heart from which the blood flows, the main-spring of the national life, believe me when I say from my experience of the world, that it is here. To the other nations of the world, religion is one among the many occupations of life. There is politics, there are the enjoyments of social life, there is all that wealth can

buy or power can bring, there is all that the senses can enjoy; and among all these various occupations of life, and all this searching after something which can give yet a little more whetting to the cloyed senses—among all these there is, perhaps, a little of religion. But here, in India, religion is the one and the only occupation of life. (C. W., III. 105-107).

The Mission of India

Sceptres have been broken and thrown away, the ball of power has passed from hand to hand; but in India, courts and kings always touched only a few; the vast mass of the people, from the highest to the lowest, has been left to pursue its own inevitable course, the current of national life flowing at times slow and half-conscious, at others, strong and awakened. I stand in awe before the unbroken procession of scores of shining centuries, with here and there a dim link in the chain, only to flare up with added brilliance in the next, and there she is walking with her own majestic steps—my motherland—to fulfil her glorious destiny, which no power on earth or in heaven can check—the regeneration of man the brute into man the God.

Aye, a glorious destiny, my brethren, for as far back as the days of the Upanishads we have thrown the challenge to the world—'न धनेन न प्रजया त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः—not by wealth, not by progeny, but by renunciation alone immortality is reached.' Race after race has taken the challenge up, and tried their utmost to solve the world-riddle on the plane of desires. They have all failed in the past—the old ones have become extinct under the weight of wickedness and misery, which lust for power and gold brings in its train, and the new ones are tottering to their fall. The question has yet to be decided whether peace will survive or war; whether patience will survive or non-forbearance, whether goodness will survive or wickedness; whether muscle will survive or brain; whether worldliness will survive or spirituality. We have solved our problem ages ago, and held on to it through good or evil fortune, and mean to hold on to it till the end of time. Our solution is unworldliness—renunciation.

This is the theme of Indian life-work, the burden of her eternal songs, the backbone of her existence, the foundation of her being, the *raison d'etre of* her very existence—the spiritualization of the human race. In this her life-course she has never deviated, whether the Tartar ruled or the Turk, whether the Moghul ruled or the English.

And I challenge anybody to show one single period of her national life when India was lacking in spiritual giants, capable of moving the world. But her work is spiritual, and that cannot be done with blasts of war-trumpets or the march of cohorts. Her influence has always fallen upon the world like that of the gentle dew, unheard and scarcely marked, yet bringing into bloom the fairest flowers of the earth. This influence being in its nature gentle, would have to wait for a fortunate combination of circumstances, to go out of the country into other lands, though it never ceased to work within the limits of its native land. As such, every educated person knows that whenever the empire-building Tartar or Persian or Greek or Arab brought this land in contact with the outside world, a mass of spiritual influence immediately flooded the world from here. The very same circumstances have presented themselves once more before us. The English high-roads over land and sea and the wonderful power manifested by the inhabitants of that little island, have once more brought India in contact with the rest of the world, and the same work has already begun. Mark my words, this is but the small beginning, big things are to follow; this I know for certain, that millions, I say deliberately, millions in every civilized land are waiting for the message that will save them from the hideous abyss of materialism into which modern money-worship is

driving them headlong, and many of the leaders of the new social movements have already discovered, that Vedanta in its highest form can alone spiritualize social aspirations.

The Result of English Conquest

Of course every conquest is bad, for conquest is an evil, foreign Government is an evil, no doubt, but even through evil comes good sometimes, and the great good of the English conquest is this : England, nay the whole of Europe, has to thank Creece for its civilization. It is Greece that speaks through everything in Europe. Every building, every piece of furniture has the impress of Greece upon it; European science and art are nothing but Greecian. Today the ancient Greek is meeting the ancient Hindu on the soil of India. Thus, slowly and silently, the leaven has come, the broadening out, the life-giving, and the revivalist movement, that we see all around us, has been worked out by these forces together. A broader and more generous conception of life is before us, and although at first we have been deluded a little and wanted to narrow things down, we are finding out today that these generous impulses which are at work, these broader conceptions of life, are the logical interpretation of what is in our ancient books. They are the carrying out, to the rigorously logical effect, of the primary conceptions of our own ancestors. To become broad, to go out, to amalgamate, to universalize, is the end of our aims. And all the time we have been making ourselves smaller and smaller, and dissociating ourselves, contrary to the plans laid down in our scriptures.

Narrow Patriotism

Several dangers are in the way, and one is that of the extreme conception that we are the people in the world. With all my love for India, and with all my patriotism, and veneration for the ancients, I cannot but think that we have to learn many things from other nations. We must be always ready to sit at the feet of all, for, mark you, every one can teach us great lessons. Says our great law giver, Manu:

> Receive some good knowledge even from the low-born and even from the man of the lowest birth, learn by service the road to heaven.

We, therefore, as true children of Manu, must obey his commands, and be ready to learn the lessons of this life, or the life hereafter from any one who can teach us. At the same time we must not forget, that we have also to teach a great lesson to the world. We cannot do without the world outside India; it was our foolishness that we thought we could, and we have paid the penalty by about a thousand years of slavery. That we did not go out to compare things with other nations, did not mark the workings that have been all around us, has been the one great cause of this degradation of the Indian mind. We have paid the penalty; let us do it no more. All such foolish ideas, that Indians must not go out of India, are childish. They must be knocked on the head; the more you go out and travel among the nations of the world, the better for you and for your country. If you had done that for hundreds of years past you would not be here today, at the feet of every nation that wants to rule India. The first manifestation of life is expansion. You must expand if you want to live. The moment you have ceased to expand, death is upon you, danger is ahead. I went to America and Europe . . ., because that is the first sign of the revival of national life, expansion. This reviving national life, expanding inside, threw me off, and thousands will be thrown off in that way. Mark my words, it has got to come if this nation lives at all. This question, therefore, is the greatest of the signs of the revival of national life, and through this expansion our quota of offering to the general mass of human knowledge, our contribution to the general upheaval of the world, is going

out to the external world. Again, this is not a new thing. Those of you who think that the Hindus have been always confined within the four walls of their country through all ages, are entirely mistaken; you have not studied the old books, you have not studied the history of the race aright if you think so. Each nation must give in order to live. When you give life you will have life; when you receive you must pay for it by giving to all others, and that we have been living for so many thousands of years is a fact that stares us in the face, and the solution that remains is that we have been always giving to the outside world, whatever the ignorant may think. (C.W., III. 272-273).

(To be concluded)

ICY HOME OF THE GANGES

By Swami Apurvananda

(Concluded)

The Last March

With the approach of dawn we left our damp shelter and began to make our way through the thick jungle. It was still drizzling; but we could not keep even our umbrellas open, because we had no regular path and had to cut our way through the dense undergrowth. We were consequently drenched by the continual falling of water from the branches of the trees; and it was a test of endurance for our wet bodies to put up with the intense cold of the early morning at that high altitude. We came out of the jungle in about an hour and reached a kind of plateau where, with great difficulty, we lighted a fire. We all sat round it and were intensely thankful for the warmth it brought to our benumbed limbs. Nothing could have been more welcome to us at that moment than this warmth, and we took advantage of the fire as long as it lasted. The rain at last stopped, and after having tea and breakfast we left that place, much refreshed. The sky gradually cleared and the warm rays of the rising sun brought new life and hope to us. We walked as fast as we could in order to cross a stream called Bhojbasha before the sun's heat caused its current to become so strong, on account of the melting snows, as to make it impossible for crossing. Our way to this stream which was about six miles from our night shelter lay mostly over boulders; and climbing up and down at that altitude soon exhausted us and made our legs very shaky. While I was jumping from one boulder to another, one of them suddenly got loose just when I had stepped on to it, and before I could realize what was happening I was rolling down with that boulder at a dangerous speed. I must have rolled down about fifteen feet when I luckily caught hold of another boulder and thus checked my fall which would otherwise have hurled me to certain death into the bed of the Ganges down below. Seeing me rolling down, my companions got terribly alarmed, thinking there was no hope for me. But when they reached the spot where I was lying and carefully lifted me up, they found to their surprise that I was absolutely unhurt. They wanted to carry me; but I told them smiling that I was not at all hurt.

It was about eleven o'clock when we reached the bank of the Bhojbasha. When we first saw this rivulet from a little distance it looked as if we could jump across it, but this close view of the rushing torrent made us realize how

difficult the crossing would be. As we had been told at Gangotri that at one place on this stream two long tree trunks had been thrown across to serve as a bridge, our guide went up and down the bank in search of this 'bridge'. When he was satisfied that there was no longer any trace of those trunks, we tried to find out some spot in the rivulet where the crossing would be least dangerous. After a long search, we discovered a place on the bank where there was a trace of human footprints, and the guide following them, at last found the missing tree trunks, lying under knee-deep water. He accordingly decided, with the help of those buried trunks, to wade across to the other side, and finally succeeded. By throwing across a stout rope and using it as a handle, the rest of us also managed to go over to the other side. It had taken us nearly an hour and a half to cross that rivulet and it was past noon when we sat down on the other bank under the canopy of the blue sky to take our meal. The sun shone brightly and we were full of joy because Gomukhi was at last within our reach. Our joy at the certainty of reaching our long cherished goal was heightened because of the grandeur and unique beauty of the scenery which now met our gaze. It seemed as if we had come to some celestial region. The whole place was studded with rocks and boulders of varied shapes and of a greyish colour, which reflected the bright rays of the sun and made them shine with a kind of unearthly light. But the most unique sight of all was the carpets of wild flowers of various colours and shapes that spread at our feet. Had our eyes not actually feasted on this riot of colour and form, we would never have believed that such a wealth of beautiful flowers could exist at this high altitude.

On the guide telling us that Gomukhi was now only four miles away, we at once got up and resumed our walk with great enthusiasm. We were in such a mood that the difficulties of the road could no longer affect our speed or cause us fatigue. Our virgin path now lay over a vast, barren plateau, full of rocks, where the only vegetation was the profusion of flowers at our feet. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when we came to a place from where the guide pointed out to us a high, snow-clad mountain and said Gomukhi lay at its foot. A little further off was a place which looked like an oasis in our rocky desert. It was a grove of Bhurja trees and when we reached it the guide advised us to camp there for the night as there was now no other place where fire-wood would be available. It was accordingly decided to pass the night there, and our clever Bhutiâ cooly soon discovered the skeleton of an old shelter under one of the Bhurja trees. This was evidently the remnant of a shelter erected in this place probably by former pilgrims and we began to rebuild it for our use. While we were doing this, one of the monks of our party suddenly remembered it was *ekâdashi* day (the eleventh day of the new moon). We all agreed that we must have our *darshan* of Gomukhi on this auspicious day, and as the whole evening was still before us, it was decided to start forthwith. As we advanced cautiously, it seemed as if we were entering into some awe-inspiring forbidden sanctuary. An uncanny sound which almost frightened us now rose at frequent intervals from the depths of the Ganges stream flowing by our side. The guide attributed this weird sound to the collision of the boulders lying deep under the icy waters of the Ganges,—so near its home in this place—with huge slabs of ice falling into the stream from the glacier of Gomukhi. As we slowly approached that glacier, our difficulties increased and there seemed to be no end to the obstacles of various kinds which confronted us. We had to cross innumerable little streams of icy water and our shoes could no longer keep our feet dry. The cold was so intense that, in spite of the bright sunshine, we shivered as we stumbled along. The rocks and boulders all around us were in a tottering condition

and seemed to threaten us, all the time, with instant destruction if they chose to roll down. The place which the guide pointed out as Gomukhi now appeared to be only about three hundred yards away, but the nearer we came the further it seemed to recede from us. The only indication that we were actually coming closer and closer was the increasing volume of that strange sound which still issued from the hidden depths of the Ganges stream.

Gomukhi

As we approached our goal, we forgot all the dangers and difficulties which surrounded us and the only feeling we had was one of tense excitement at the thought of what Gomukhi would actually be like. We, at last, came to a rocky elevation from where we had our first real sight of Gomukhi. We were thrilled beyond measure by what we saw, and I find it impossible to describe my feelings at that moment. The Ganges appeared to issue, in silent calm, from inside a cavern of ice; and all around its birthplace, as far as the eye could see, was a vast glacier of shining ice. The rays of the late afternoon sun made this glacier and the snow-clad mountain on the right shine with a golden, purple tint. The ethereal beauty of the whole scene enchanted us and held us spellbound. When we were about a hundred and fifty yards from Gomukhi, the sight of a huge avalanche frightened us. Large slabs of ice broke away, at short intervals, from this avalanche with an awful crunching sound and crashed into the stream as it came out of its ice cave. The sight and sound of these continually falling ice blocks terrified my companions, and even the guide refused to proceed any further because of the danger of being hit by splinters flying out of the crash. As I was determined to go as near Gomukhi as possible, I began to advance alone in spite of the guide's warning, and was soon joined by the other Sannyâsin and Tekram who could not resist the temptation of going with me.

We finally reached a spot within fifty yards of the real Gomukhi and saw more clearly than before the original Ganges stream gushing out from the depths of its ice home. The opening through which the stream was flowing looked like a tunnel, the diameter of which might have been about fifteen yards, the distance from the top of its arch to the water level being about ten yards. All three of us stood on a big slab of ice of a bluish tint and performed our worship of Mother Ganges with flowers and other offerings which we had carried for this purpose. Although our bodies shivered with cold, I was determined somehow to take my ceremonial bath in the sacred waters of the Ganges at this holy spot. Practically the whole of the surface of the stream, as it came out of the tunnel, was covered with floating ice and I could not discover any open space of water for taking a plunge. There was, however, no time to lose as the guide was shouting to us repeatedly to turn back. In the excitement of the moment I stripped myself, and stepped on to a floating piece of ice which sank under my weight. When the freezing ice water first touched my feet a kind of electric shock went through my whole body; but I was already waist-deep in the water; and, in a mad haste, I began to remove the ice with both hands to make a little space sufficient for a dive. In breast-deep water, I took three plunges, with the name of Gangâ Mâi on my lips, and rushed out, with equally mad haste, to save myself from being frozen to death between the floating ice slabs. It is impossible for me to describe my feelings on coming out of the water because, the excitement being over, I seemed to have lost all consciousness for the moment. My brother Sannyâsin also wanted to have a similar bath, but he almost collapsed as soon as he was waist-deep in water and had to be dragged out. Tekram had hardly been knee-deep in the frozen stream when he jumped out with a terrible shriek that his legs had been cut off by some monster!

As the evening was fast approaching,

we could not stay where we were much longer; and after making our obeisance to Gangâ Mâi, and offering Her our heartfelt thanks for permitting us to enter Her sacred abode, we started to rejoin our companions. They were all sitting where we had left them, huddled up under a large blanket and trying to keep warm with the aid of a small fire which had been lighted by the guide with the fuel that he had carried with him. After warming our own 'iced' limbs at this welcome fire, we all started together for our camping ground. When we reached that place at dusk, we were greeted by a roaring fire which had been lighted by our good Bhutiâ porter who had collected a large quantity of wood from the Bhurja jungle. By the time we had finished our meal and completed the unfinished shelter, it was quite dark and the moon gradually came out. As we all sat round the fire inside the shelter, we felt the sanctity of the atmosphere around us and began to chant from the Upanishads and the Gita. One of the Sannyâsins sang Shankara's Hymn to Mother Ganges beginning with: 'Oh, Goddess, Thou Exalted One among the gods, the Divine Gangâ of sportive waves, who hast made your abode on the head of Lord Shankara; and who with your pristine holiness bringeth emancipation to the three worlds—may Thou be pleased to give me devotion to Thy Lotus Feet!' The other Sannyâsin, under the influence of the all-pervading silence, recited Swami Vivekananda's famous invocation to the Universal Brahman: 'One Mass, devoid of form, name and colour—timeless, devoid of time, past and future—spaceless, voiceless, boundless, devoid of all—where rests hushed even speech of negation!' Our songs resounded through the silent night air of that snowy region ; and we were so elated by that inspiring atmosphere that it was not before midnight that anyone thought of sleep. Even then, I was feeling so thrilled at the memory of my afternoon plunge at Gomukhi, that I could not sleep at all. I was seized with a longing to go once more to that celestial home of the Ganges, and I waited impatiently for the dawn in order to carry out my desire.

As soon as the night was over, I woke up the Sannyâsin who had already experienced with me the thrill of Gomukhi, and told him of my plan to start immediately for that glacier. He decided to accompany me once again. The rest of the party had also got up by now, and one of the two Pâhâris also decided to come with us. The temperature outside seemed to be well below freezing point when we started, and a thick mist hung over the whole place. We shook with cold as we proceeded, and stumbled among the rocks in the blinding mist. As we approached Gomukhi, there was absolute silence and even the avalanche produced no sound now as it had done the previous afternoon. The very stream of the Ganges was flowing noiselessly at this silent hour. This time we went much closer to Gomukhi than on the previous day and finally stood on an ice slab only a few yards from the Ganges cavern. There was no breeze and no movement of any kind whatsoever. It seemed as if even the Lord of the universe had stopped breathing for a moment! The same thick veil of mist hung over the whole unearthly region. I again felt an irresistible desire to take a plunge in that icy stream, and after breaking a thin layer of ice, dived in as I had done the previous afternoon. I had, however, forgotten, in the excitement of the moment, the difference in temperature between the two occasions; and when I dragged myself out I was almost in a state of collapse and the Pâhâri had to rub my benumbed body to restore circulation. My brother Sannyâsin's attempt to follow me, had an amusing result. As the temperature of the air was, at this time, about the same as the atmosphere of the water, he thought the water had reached his head when he was actually only waist-deep in the stream, and he made movements of

diving in the air instead of in the water! Even in my exhausted condition I could not help laughing when I saw those queer movements. When he came out I told the excited Swami what had actually happened, and having understood, he himself laughed heartily at the illusion. Our Pâhâri companion, after seeing the plight of each of us, did not dare touch that frozen stream at all! We again performed the ceremonial worship of Gangâ Mâi, and at last turned back with the greatest reluctance.

It was just then that the first rays of the rising sun fell on the glacier above us and on the snow-capped peaks around. The eternal beauty of that vast glacier, stretching for miles before us, was revealed to our astonished gaze for the first time, and we gasped in wonder that a sight so sublime could ever be witnessed by human eyes! The sun's rays now began to play on the frozen waters of the Ganges stream, and we gazed at another scene of beauty in Gangâ Mâi's fairy-land. The breath-taking beauty of these scenes following one another had such an influence on our minds that we became completely oblivious, for the moment, of all our physical sufferings and difficulties. The idea of leaving that heavenly region made us very sad, and we looked back at Gomukhi again and again as we finally dragged ourselves away. It was after we had the last sight of that celestial region that the reaction of the dip into that icy stream began to be felt. The lower part of our bodies had become so numb on account of the exposure that we had very little control over our legs. We constantly stumbled against stones and our feet began to bleed. It was nearly ten o'clock when we at last reached the camp. Our companions were standing in a group by the side of the Ganges, gazing intently at some object; and on joining them we found they were looking at a herd of some seven or eight strange animals. The guide said these were Barârs, a kind of deer which roam in the high snows. During the winter months they are actually said to live without food or drink—hibernating in some cave to protect themselves against the heavy and frequent snow-falls.

Farewell to Ganga Mai's Abode

We had at last achieved our goal; and finally we bade farewell to Gomukhi with our hearts full of gratitude to the benign River Goddess for allowing us to enter Her celestial abode and to witness its sublime beauty, once in the afternoon glow and again in the ethereal height of a magical morning. My own gratitude to Gangâ Mâi was beyond expression because of Her kindly indulgence to my repeated invasion of her innermost sanctuary. Was She not kind because She knew that mine was, after all, the daring of love for Her lotus feet?

From the day we left Dehra Dun till the morning of my second plunge into Gomukhi's frozen stream, time had registered a period of only twenty days. But so many unforgettable experiences were crowded into that brief interval, that their memory has left indelible marks on my mind. Though it is now more than five years since I made that memorable pilgrimage, I often feel as if I had seen Gomukhi only yesterday! And even today in my quiet moments the blessed memories of that sacred place—Gomukhi—bring inspiration and joy in my mind. Gangâ Mâi often beckons to me to visit Her 'Icy Home' once more. It may be possible only by the blessings of Lord Shiva from whose matted locks the holy Ganges first sprang.

'Jai Gangâ Mâi Ki Jai!'

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

The religious ideas of ancient India have stood the test of time for centuries. But they still stand in need of being examined afresh in the light of modern developments in society and State, if they are to play an important part in contemporary history. The present number of the *Prabuddha Bharata* discusses this matter from various points of view. The editorial shows that India can make substantial contribution to modern civilization, provided the proper frame of mind is brought into existence in the West. . . . Swami Nirvedananda looks at the same question from another standpoint and shows that in the West, under a thin integument of culture, the cave-man still lives an unregenerate life. . . . Prof. Hem Chandra Ray Chaudhuri's scholarly article brings into prominence some social ideas which are not rightly comprehended in modern India. . . . Prof. Govinda Chandra Dev finds that the spiritual values of India have nothing to lose even if the most up-to-date theory for the economic betterment of the masses, including socialism, is given the fullest play. . . . Swami Pavitrananda has culled some valuable passages from the works of Swami Vivekananda bearing on *The Spirit of Indian Civilization*. . . . Mr. Malcolm Subhan of Aligarh touches on a different theme and argues that so long as the masses are not fully enlightened it is useless to blame the scientists for the ailments of the world.

Hindu View of Life

In an illuminating article on 'The Aryan View of Life' in the *Indian Review* for December 1943, Dr. M. H. Syed writes:

> This (the Hindu) view of life fills one's heart with indomitable courage, unshakable faith in man's creative nature and his final success. One endowed with such insight into his inner capacities and divine potentialities is never afraid of any change of social, religious, or political outlook. He is ever ready to reform himself and the social fabric which is the outcome of his own erstwhile creation. Anyone who accepts this outlook on life and believes in his divine nature, need have no fear of any transformation which is the law of changing life. He should ever be ready to renounce effete and outworn ideals which have had their day, and should never hesitate to adopt any new scheme of life which may conduce to his happiness, and promote the well-being of his race or community.

It is not unoften that Hindu religion and philosophy are misunderstood and misrepresented by Western thinkers and also by some Indians. Hindus are sometimes looked upon as visionary idealists and their philosophy of life is said to be unreal and unpractical. The imperfections in Hindu society are attributed to this 'wrong' outlook on life and to the influence of religion. In his article in the *Aryan Path* for December 1943, Mr. Madan Gopal thinks that 'the real problem of India is, at its root, the problem of our fixed attitude towards life and its problems'. He observes:

> Rationalism and a scientific outlook are shunned. Implicit faith in Fate and absolute resignation to God's will are extolled. Contentment with the lot one is placed in is held to be the ideal. . . . All latent originality and initiative are stifled. . . . Life is looked upon as an unwelcome burden, never as a privilege. Our highest-class literature, plays, and cinemas harp upon the same pessimistic attitude towards life. The most popular tunes are pregnant with such ideas as: 'The world is an illusion,' 'Man is like a bubble on the surface of the sea,' . . . 'Shun sagacity and follow God.' . . . To bring about regeneration on the social plane, which largely determines the economic and political complexion, it is imperative that we undermine the influence of religion, for the progress of religion and of the social or political order cannot go hand in hand.

Individuals or groups may be guilty of such allegations as above, but by no means can these be laid at the door of Hindu religion and philosophy as such. Even an elementary knowledge of Hindu philosophy as expounded in the

Upanishads and the Bhagavadgita, and restated by the *achâryas* and, in our own times, by Swami Vivekananda will prove that these charges against the Hindu outlook on life are baseless and untrue. Dr. Syed has admirably presented a true picture of the Hindu view of life, and points out how it offers immense possibilities to every man in the field of creative activity as well as practical wisdom. Hinduism, while placing before man a 'glorious and inspiring' ideal, has always stressed the need for self-effort in the attainment of that ideal and has urged everyone to 'stand on one's own legs'. He writes :

> This ideal of the divinity of man leads us to believe, unlike the teachings of some of the religions of the semitic stock, that he is not to lean on or depend upon an external agency for his salvation or liberation. In all conscience, he has to work out his own salvation. . . . There is no uncertainty about the steps the seeker takes stage by stage. His success or otherwise depends entirely on the amount of effort he applies and the energy he devotes to its pursuit.

Those who take pride in possessing a 'scientific outlook that strictly adheres to reason and logic' think that happiness consists in the attainment of material comforts and sense-pleasures. But experience tells us that it is not so. True happiness can come only through self-knowledge, infinite and absolute, which is to be experienced and realized. It is beyond the reach of the senses or ordinary logical reasoning, though not contradictory to these. Some persons are often carried away by the force of Western intellectualism and the glamour of scientific advancement, and carelessly dismiss our own time-honoured philosophical truths, religious ideas, and social institutions as unpractical, fatalistic, and meaningless. Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan truly observes that 'in India today we are faced by a real danger of ignoring the importance of ideal values in our anxiety to incorporate scientific conceptions and political devices into our national life.' He says,

> In spite of scientific backwardness, social inefficiency and political ineptitude, our ancient sages possessed a true perception of the right values which make for human happiness. . . . The roots of all great thinking lie deep in life itself and not in the dry light of mere reasoning. Creative work in science and philosophy, art and literature, is due to this something which is greater than mere knowledge.

And there are those who desire root-and-branch reform to be effected overnight, and demand the displacement of religion by science and politics. But they seem to forget that religion, in its true sense, is the backbone of the Indian nation, and human nature cannot be hurried into change. Political and scientific ideas, unless tempered by the fire of spiritual force, may prove formidable engines of destruction for mankind.

Christianity in India

Writing on 'The Contribution of Christianity to Indian Nationalism' in the *Aryan Path* for December 1943, Mr. A. J. Appasamy holds that Christians in India have played a large part in the sphere of education, medical relief, and rural reconstruction. It is a fact that in this country Christian missionaries have been running schools and colleges for boys and girls, maintaining dispensaries and hospitals, and carrying on 'reconstruction' work in selected areas among village folk and also among certain groups of people called 'aboriginals' and 'depressed classes'. But we would have been glad if this was all that was done. An American missionary once wrote:

> They (the missionary schools) represent the leaven of Christianity in India. They furnish excellent opportunity to present Christ and His Gospel of salvation to a large host of young people under very favourable circumstances. . . . And I fearlessly maintain that more conversions take place and more accessions are made through these schools than through any other agency.

Christian solicitude for the regeneration of the masses of India is commendable, but not completely above reproach. For with the Christians proselytism has always been, and still is, one of the main objects to be achieved. The writer himself gives expression to this when he says,

They (Christians) have introduced Christ to India. Through the Christian schools and colleges in India, the knowledge of the Gospels has spread widely. Multitudes of young people have been taught the Bible, and have come to know of Christ. The seed sown has in many cases produced no fruit at all, but in a great many others it has yielded fruit thirtyfold, sixtyfold, or even a hundredfold.

Many Hindus adore the spiritual personality of Christ with no less regard than most Christians themselves do. That is why the Hindu readily accepts the teachings of Christ, but finds it not easy to fall in line with organized Christianity which confines itself to the Church. One can understand the missionary zeal to 'spread the faith,' and voluntary conversions through personal conviction are never objected to. But those who make proselytism their platform of work and wean away illiterate and aboriginal classes from their mother faith by allurements of social and economic betterment can hardly be looked upon as contributing to the best interests of India. In the past, India has been ill-served by foreign Christian missionaries who spared no pains, through their speeches and writings, to slander Hinduism and expose only the faults and failings of the Hindus. We hope that Christians of our own land, today, will do their best not to follow this example, but to give their contribution to the country's progress, in the true Christian spirit, with sympathy and toleration towards non-Christians.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

BHAGAVAD GITA—AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY. By K. Navaratnam. With a Foreword by S. S. Suryanarayan Sastri. *Published by the author from the Kala Nilayam, Jaffna. Pp. 95. Price Re. 1.*

Mr. Navaratnam's apology for adding this short treatise to the treatment of the Gita is that he wants to popularize the message of the Gita among the students of Ceylon. Indeed the universal and catholic teachings of the Gita should reach them by all means. Specially the Gita should be the very foundation of our character-building. Naturally, Mr. Navaratnam has done a great service for the welfare of the students of Ceylon by publishing this simple but learned introductory study to the Gita. The *Foreword* by Sri Suryanarayana Sastri and the appendix at the end of the book have enhanced its worth. We are glad to see that the writer has referred to all eminent scholars—classical and modern—while explaining the teachings of the Gita. He thinks the commentaries of Sri Aurobindo and Tilak to be the 'most outstanding commentaries written to suit the spirit of the twentieth century' and has been guided by them, though he has referred to Shankara and Ramanuja as well. We hope that this little book will create interest for a deeper study of the Gita in the young minds of the unbiased students, irrespective of caste, colour, or creed.

HINDU MYSTICISM, Part I. By Mahendra Nath Sircar, with a Foreword by Sir N. N. Sircar. *Published by Bharati Mahavidyalaya, Calcutta. Pp. XI+171. Price Rs. 3-8.*

The hazy notions which the scientific rationalists entertain about ultimate values, have, in their confused minds, led to the unjustifiable identification of mysticism with mystification. There is, however, no excuse at the present day for the persistence of such confusion. Bergson it was who first showed to the Western world the real significance of intuition and mysticism. And the recent works of Underhill, Francis Younghusband, and others of the West, and the monumental works of Professors Radhakrishnan, Ranade, and Belvelkar of our own country have, between them, covered the whole ground of religious and philosophical mysticism. And now, the great scholar Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar has, with the publication of the work under review, joined the noble band of interpreters of Hindu Mysticism.

The book is the first part of Dr. Sircar's larger projected treatise, and is divided into nineteen chapters. Each chapter is a gem of exposition, complete in itself, and sets forth, in the main, the mystical significance of some aspect of Vaishnava religion. Commencing with a discussion of the place of revaluation in true religion, the gifted

author treats us to a series of discourses on *Ethical and Moral Mysticism, Psychism, Personalistic and Activistic Mysticism, Divine Aestheticism, Time and Reciprocity in Spiritual Life, God, Love, Grace, Yoga,* and subjects of similar import. The several topics are directly based on Vaishnava teachings and practice, but the presentation is 'free, following the spirit and the inspiration, rather than the details of teachings'. The nature of mysticism as it ramifies into the various aspects of the living dynamic spiritual life is the theme *par excellence* of Dr. Sircar's work. 'Mysticism is a live inspiration.' It 'deals with life in its utmost stress of creative expression and Being in its unfathomable stillness'. 'Vaishnavic mysticism is personalistic. It rises in the height of being, definiteness and wide expression as it grows in its essential nature.' The mystic 'becomes a piece of living poetry, beauteous in form, rhythmical in the beats of being. . . . He has the unique experience of the iridescence of light, the efflorescence of bliss, the ease of life, and the cosmic stirring of will.' The chapters dealing with aestheticism in Vaishnava religion, and with love, grace, salvation, and the nature of Godhead are remarkably profound, and fresh, and at the same time, not beyond the comprehension of the average reader.

It is a great mind, a master-mind in fact, that is at work in *Hindu Mysticism* revealing to us its unique reactions to the foundations of a religion which has stirred the hearts of millions of our countrymen in the North as well as in the South, to its very depths. Who can withstand the ravishing tunes of the hymn *Vaishnava Janatho* beloved of Gandhiji? Treatises there are, lay and learned, philosophic and popular, in endless variety on the teachings of Vaishnava *âchâryas, azhvars,* and *gurus.* Some of them are of forbidding aspect by reason of their terse aphoristic style or of their quaint *manipravala* language. One has only to think in this connection of the writings of Pillailokacharya, Jamunacharya, and Manavalamamuni to realize the utter hopelessness, as expounded in these works, of any law attempt at understanding the fundamentals of the Vaishnava faith. Dr. Sircar's work, therefore, satisfies a real need in the life of every cultured Hindu who is not altogether carried away by the materialism and meliorism of modern times. This invaluable brochure ought to find its way into the home of every Vaishnava ; and I would strongly recommend it to every research scholar in philosophy who is seeking a fresh and illuminating approach to the problems of comparative religion and of philosophy of religion.

P. S. N.

SANSKRIT-ENGLISH

RAMANA-CHATVARIMSHAT. By KAVYAKANTA GANAPATI MUNI. *Published by Niranjanananda Swami, Sri Ramanashramam, Tiruvannamalai. Pp. 16. Price one anna.*

Ramana-chatvârimshat or forty verses in praise of Shri Ramana Maharshi is an excellent panegyric composed by the late poet Ganapati Muni. The poet was a devoted disciple of Ramana Maharshi, the celebrated saint of South India ; hence, every verse is marked with a clear stamp of devotion which is so apparent that even a casual reader will not fail to notice it. To read the verses is a pleasure, not only for their devotional tone but for the poetic imagination manifested in them as well. We recommend these verses to the devoted public.

DINESH CHANDRA GUHA

SANSKRIT

UMASAHASRAM. BY VASISHTA GANAPATI MUNI. *Published by Sitaram Vighneshwara Bharati, Nandini Press, Shirasi, Canara. Pp. 464. Price Rs. 5.*

Umâsahasram or thousand verses in praise of the Goddess Umâ by the late poet Ganapati Muni is a masterpiece of poetry. Ganapati Muni was a natural poet, gifted with sublime poetic imagination and penetrating inner vision. He was a poet of devotional temperament, and these thousand verses unambiguously prove his deep devotion to the Goddess Umâ whom he worshipped as his ideal. The poet was a philosopher of no mean order as his philosophical insight can well be imagined from a perusal of these thousand verses.

The commentary on *Umâsahasram* is lucid and faithful to the original work. Expositions by direct disciples generally become reliable, and the commentator who is a direct disciple of the poet may be relied upon in his exposition of the philosophical view-points of his preceptor. Subtle points of philosophical interest have been aptly justified by the commentator. This fact clearly demonstrates his wide range of study and mastery over the various philosophical systems.

Both the *Umâsahasram* and its commentary can be whole-heartedly recommended to the poetry-loving public in general and the scholars of philosophy in particular. But here and there, there are some observations which cannot be justified from an orthodox standpoint of Indian philosophy. Of course, if the work claims to establish a new system

of philosophy, nothing can be said against it from that point of view.

Supreme *Chit* (consciousness) has been divided into three forms, e.g., wish, activity, and knowledge (10th verse, 2nd *stavaka*, 1st *shataka*). This division is arbitrary and is not supported anywhere in the authoritative orthodox philosophical treatises. The *mâyâ* of the Advaita system of Vedânta philosophy has been assumed as *shakti* (11th verse, 3rd *stavaka*, 1st *shataka*), which is unwarranted. It has been argued that if *shakti* cannot create a sportive body (*lilâtanu*) for her, she is not omnipotent (13th verse, 3rd *stavaka*, 1st *shataka*). A little reflection will expose the hollowness of this argument. God, though omnipotent, cannot indeed deduce five from two plus two. This sort of incapacity does not in any way affect his omnipotence, for certainly God should not be expected to break all the laws of truth and consistency to establish his omnipotence before his critics. If consciousness is the only supreme entity, which it certainly is according to the scriptures, God can never make it otherwise. The body of *shakti* has been described as deathless (*amritam*) and that of God as *pranava* (*Om*) (17th verse, 3rd *stavaka*, 1st *shataka*). Evidently some sort of difference between the two bodies has been imagined. This also is unauthoritative. Is then *pranava* perishable? If by the term *amritam* the author means nectar, then also the question may be put to him to explain what he exactly means by nectar. Mythological explanation will never be accepted in a philosophical treatise. The world manifestation, as it is experienced by us during our waking stage, is conceived as the transformation of the aggregate consciousness (17th verse, 1st *stavaka*, 10th *shataka*). This view cannot be justified by argument. Strictly speaking, there can be no *parinâma* of consciousness in the technical philosophical sense of the term. The example furnished to establish the view-point has rendered the cause weaker. Is dream ever conceived in any authoritative philosophical treatise as the coarse form of the subtle consciousness?

In some places the commentator also has tried to convince his readers with fallacious arguments. Transitoriness (*nashvaratvam*) has been supposed to be the argument to prove the instability (*anityatvam*) of the body (commentary on the 8th verse, 3rd *stavaka*, 1st *shataka*), and in so doing the commentator has clearly committed the fallacy of begging the question. Feminine and masculine forms of God have been inferred from the same argument (commentary on the 15th verse, 3rd *stavaka*, 1st *shataka*), which is impossible. Can two contrary terms be ever predicated of the same subject by the same argument?

In spite of all these drawbacks, the work with its commentary is on the whole agreeable. The reader will simply be charmed with the poetic imagination of the author. The tone of devotion is predominant in the entire work. The poet-philosopher Ganapati Muni was a real lover indeed. He had unshakable faith in the name of the Lord, and hence temperamentally he did not like to enter into rituals and logical discourses (16th verse, 3rd *stavaka*, 8th *shataka*). It must also be admitted that the poet had an inventive capacity and the Sanskrit-knowing world will surely be sorry to think that a poet of such an eminence is no more on this earth. It is to be expected that all other works of the poet will be published without delay.

We whole-heartedly recommend the book under review to the Sanskrit-knowing world in general and to the poetry-loving public in particular.

DINESH CHANDRA GUHA

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ON DISTRESS RELIEF

Optimistic talk about the recent *Âman* crop seems to have created an impression among the public that Bengal has turned the corner and that the end of the distress is in sight. Nothing is farther from the truth. Hopes raised by the last crop have proved false. Hunger, disease, and destitution continue in the countryside. Destitutes have even started coming to towns again. If the present relief activities of the different organizations are discontinued or even curtailed, people will begin to die wholesale again.

Appeals are pouring to us from our various relief centres and also from other quarters insisting upon the necessity of continuing and even extending our relief operations. All the reports draw the same dismal picture. Worse still, there is the general apprehension of a far worse catastrophe in the coming months of April and May.

Large deficit areas of Bengal are in awful plight. Rice is not only dear, but the total

quantity available is also quite insufficient for their needs. Licensed merchants do not feel prompted to buy rice and transport it to deficit areas, since they have usually to buy it at prices which leave them very small margin of profit.

Landless labour of all descriptions, artisans of all classes, small traders and middle-class wage-earners are the people who have been worst hit. The majority of them, who are now living on doles, will die of starvation even if the price of rice goes down considerably. Most of them have no market for their goods; others are idle because of the lack of implements and trade materials. Having sold their all, they are utter destitutes, without proper cover or shelter, stricken with diseases and living upon doles. It has been roughly estimated that at least 30% of the population in most of the localities where we are giving relief will starve, if our relief is discontinued at present. The severe economic dislocation of the country will have to be repaired and its economic life restored to some extent before relief can be discontinued or curtailed.

It is evident in the light of all this that the need for relief work continues and is even greater in some of the districts. Not only are the destitutes to be fed and clothed, but houses have also to be built and work provided for them. Workers who have lost employment and have been uprooted from their homes and villages have to be rehabilitated. Gradually the economic life of the village communities will have to be built up anew.

Diseases like malaria, small-pox, and cholera are still taking a heavy toll of lives. The need for medicines and the services of qualified medical men is great and urgent.

In view of the slight improvement in the situation in some districts but more particularly for want of funds our Mission from 50 centres covering 19 districts is at present conducting gratuitous relief work in a restricted form by giving free doles of rice to a large proportion of the destitutes especially those who are infirm or unable for any other reason to work just now, as well as giving rice etc. in exchange for work of some sort such as paddy-husking, cane work, etc. We are also distributing medicines and diet among the diseased.

We, therefore, appeal to the generous public to send us help so that relief may continue till confidence returns and the crisis is over.

Swami Madhavananda
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission,
Belur Math, Howrah.
15. 2. 1944.

PRIZE DISTRIBUTION AND SPORTS AT THE BELUR RAMAKRISHNA MISSION COLLEGE

The annual sports and prize distribution ceremony of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira came off on the 31st January last. A short but neat function providing some entertainments in the shape of songs, recitations, and comic skits was organized for the occasion. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, lately the Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University, presided and gave away the prizes. The Principal, in welcoming the president, referred to Dr. Majumdar's great services in the field of historical research in India and pointed out as well the justification for starting a residential college at Belur. He dwelt upon the ideas with which the Institution was started and how it aimed at providing an education calculated to develop the whole personality of a boy.

The president in the course of his speech remarked that the vital necessity of developing in our boys an appreciation of the moral and spiritual values of life, so essential for the real art of living, has been grossly neglected in our educational institutions. He was one of those who watched with keen interest and delight the growth and development of this residential college and hoped that the Vidyamandira, inspired as it was by the great ideas and ideals of the Mission, would fill up the lacunae in the educational arrangements of our day.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX APRIL, 1944 No. 4



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

SUBDUING THE SENSES

By Swami Turiyananda

May such zeal and yearning never leave you. Everybody should yearn for progress and for attainment of love of God and the goal of human life by leading a pure life. I am much delighted to learn that you have such sincere yearning. My humble prayer to the Lord is that He may give you strength. It is extremely difficult to subdue the senses; but there is no other way. You have asked which sense should be subdued first, but the Lord has said that all the senses have to be brought under control. 'Having restrained all of them,' etc. Manu says that if only one of the senses remain uncontrolled, it steals away all judgement, even as all water oozes out unnoticingly from an unbaked clay pitcher.

If only one among the senses leaks, all judgement is drained away by it like water from an unbaked earthen pitcher (Manu, II, 99).

So all the senses have to be subdued. And though all of them are strong, there is no doubt that palate and sex are the chief among them. It is said in the *Bhâgavata*, too, that one cannot be termed a victor of the senses, though he has conquered all, but not the palate.

A man is not a victor of the senses until he has conquered the palate, though he might have conquered all the rest. When the palate is subdued, everything is conquered. (*Bhâgavata*, XI. viii. 21).

So the palate has to be subdued first. But the Lord has also expressed differently in the following way:

Objects fall away from the abstinent man, leaving the longing behind. But his longing ceases, who sees the Supreme. (Gita, II. 59).

If one devotes oneself to spiritual practices by fasting etc., the objects may fall away, but not the longing for them. The attachment goes only when God is realized. As our Master used to say, 'A man who has tasted candy syrup loses all taste for treacle.' That is to say, if one can love God, human love loses all appeal. One should love Him. Then sense-objects will not have any more appeal and will appear as trash. 'The more one advances to the

east, the more is the west left behind.' Similarly the more you will advance towards God, the more the sense-objects will fall behind of themselves without any attempt at renouncing them. This is the secret. The essential thing is to call on God. No attempt at subduing desires or the senses will be needed, they will be conquered automatically.

Devotion to God means surrendering life and mind and everything to Him. He should be the darling of the heart. The heart should yearn for Him cent per cent. One has to weep for not realizing Him, for not being able to love Him. In that case alone He will draw you unto Him. His mercy is necessary, nothing will be attained without His mercy. But as the Master used to say, 'He advances a hundred steps nearer if one takes a step towards Him.' He has infinite mercy. This is the only hope. Try to love Him by surrendering your heart and soul and all to Him. You will discover how merciful He is. Dress and food do not matter much. There is no harm in satisfying petty desires, but there should be discrimination. You should see that no particular attachment develops for anything but God. Holy company, books which deal with divine subjects, keeping away from evil company—these are necessary for the growth of devotion. Try to progress towards the Lord in this way and you will have no cause for fear. Taking refuge in Him, one is delivered from all anxiety and trouble. The Lord's words are:

> Take refuge in Him with all thy heart, O Bhârata; by His grace shalt thou attain supreme peace (and) the eternal abode. (Gita, XVIII, 62).

What more? Take refuge in Him and you will be ever blissful.

HINDUISM ABROAD (I)

By the Editor

I

The introduction of Hindu thoughts, especially Hindu religious thoughts, outside India, and their subsequent progress and vicissitudes, transformation and decline, triumph and defeat are an interesting study, which brings to light the inherent strength and weakness of Hinduism. In strange lands Hinduism often stands aloof for a time as a model for an alternative course of life appealing increasingly to the higher minds, and then its best features are brought into bold relief; or from the very beginning it percolates gradually into the foreign society by a process of give and take, and then is demonstrated its power of adaptability; or it may be in open conflict with unknown modes of thought, and then is tested its strength to withstand onslaughts.

From such a comparative examination of Hinduism we become aware of the circumstances that are favourable to its growth, of the ways and means which promoted its cause in the past, and of the fortuitous pitfalls and natural drawbacks that ultimately spelt disaster, till Hinduism withdrew itself progressively from foreign lands to take up an untenable defensive position in its homeland. Research in the field is still in its infancy. But the materials already available are so varied and extensive that it is impossible to do full justice to the subject in one or two articles. But the subject is arresting, for who is not inspired by the achievements of his forbears? Besides, no quest can be wholly useless, particularly if it can arouse interest for further investigation. We, therefore, propose here to make a hurried survey of Hinduism in various countries from the historical point of view. And in a subsequent

article we shall try to ascertain why Hinduism failed to retain the position won by it through long centuries. We begin with South-east Asia. For here the triumphal march of Hinduism was most striking, and available data throw a flood of light on its different phases.

Kambuja, Champa, Siam, Sumatra, Java, Bali, Burma, and the Malay Peninsula were not culturally far advanced when they came into contact with Indian thought. Hinduism came to Funan or old Cambodia probably by way of Java. The legendary Hindu contact dates back to not later than the first century A.D., when Kaundinya (Houen-t'ien of the Chinese), an Indian Brahmin, obtained the sovereignty of Funan through his marriage with Somâ, a *Nâgi* princess of the land. An old Khmer legend speaks of Java Brahmins (*Cheva-pre'ahm*) coming to Kambuja to found a kingdom. They had long hair and a dark complexion and claimed to be Brahmins from Vârânasi (Pareanosey). A second Kaundinya, coming also from India was 'chosen king' by the people of Funan in about the end of the fourth century or the beginning of the fifth century A.D. 'He changed all the rules according to the methods of India.' His dynasty added the title Varman to their names.

Kambuja (Chenla of the Chinese) soon threw off the yoke of Funan under Kambu who married the *Apsarâ* Merâ. Thenceforward Kambuja had a most glorious career. The State religion was most often Shaivism, though Vaishnavism and Mahayana Buddhism had their due share of importance. The two great architectural achievements of Kambuja, which still strike wonder, are the Bayon tower in Angkor Thom (Nagara Dhâma) or the great city founded by Yashovarman who ascended the throne in 889 A.D., and Angkor Vat built probably during the reign of Suryavarman II (1112-1152), the architect of the latter being Divâkara, the spiritual teacher of three successive kings. The former enshrined Shiva and the latter Vishnu, though images of other Hindu and Buddhist deities were also in evidence. There were other Shiva and Vishnu temples in the land, and Buddhist shrines were by no means rare. In religion the Khmer people arrived at a syncretism in which Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism played equally important parts, though Shaivism had always the place of honour. Sanskrit was greatly in use, though Khmer literature flourished side by side. The *Dharmashâstra* of Manu formed, and still forms, the basis of Cambodian law, although the Brahminic code has been considerably modified by Buddhist influence and local customs. Khmer art and architecture were influenced by those of the India of the Guptas, the Pallavas, and the early Chalukyas. How thoroughly Kambuja was saturated with Hinduism can be gathered from the following account:

> The kings, nobles, and priests had Sanskrit names. The Pandits of the royal court wrote the inscriptions . . . in elegant Sanskrit. Princes were educated by their Gurus in the Siddhântas (mathematics and astronomy), the Sanskrit grammar (especially the works of Panini and Patanjali), the *Dharmashâstras*, the different systems of philosophy, etc. . . . Vedic sacrifices like the *Mahâ-homa, Laksha-homa, Koti-homa*, etc., were performed by the monarchs. The Vedas (especially the *Atharvaveda*) and the *Vedângas* were carefully studied. The invocations to Shiva in the earliest inscriptions show knowledge of the Vedanta. Daily recitations, without interruption, of the *Râmâyana*, the *Mahâbhârata*, and the *Purânas* are referred to in a sixth century inscription. (*Indian Influence in Cambodia* by Bijanraj Chatterji, p. 237).

By the end of the fifteenth century, the Cambodian kingdom disintegrated as a result of continuous thrust from Siam, which had thenceforward a triumphal march; and with this, Hinayanism came to the forefront and Hinduism and Buddhism speedily declined.

The history of Champa (Annam) is very similar to that of Cambodia. We are told that a mythical Bhrigu came down from heaven at Shiva's behest to consecrate the Linga of Shambhubhadreshvara, which was later on taken care of by Uroja who also came down at Shiva's command to found a king-

dom. The later kings trace their descent from Uroja. Champa seems to have come under Hindu influence in the first century A.D. Thenceforward Hinduization progressed rapidly. The kings were Hindus. Each one of the fifty kings of Champa who ruled from the seventh to the thirteenth century A.D., bore names ending in Varman. Sanskrit was greatly in use. The art and architecture, although not directly derivable from Indian sources, were greatly influenced by the latter. Shaivism was the ruling creed, though other faiths, as in Kambuja, had honoured places. The Hindu kings tried to advance the cause of Hinduism and maintain contact with India. Thus Bhadravarman built the temple of Bhadreshvara at Mi-son; and his son and successor Gangaraja abdicated in order to spend his last days on the banks of the Ganges.

Siamese tradition has it that two Brahmins, after having peopled two villages with their offspring, selected a king, Pathanaraja, and then retired from the world for *tapasyâ*. Finds of Brahminical deities in Siam testify to the fact that there was considerable Hindu influence in the early days and that there was a large Hindu population. Siam acknowledged for a time the suzerainty of Kambuja. The first Siamese royal dynasty was established at Sukhadaya in 1218 A.D., the first historical king being Indrâditya. An inscription of Râmarâja, the third king, which is dated 1293 A.D., mentions temples with Buddha's images, monasteries with Buddhist monks, and a *Mahâtherâ* versed in the Tripitaka. Siam of those days had religious affiliation with Ceylon, from which country she invited missionaries, and it was Siamese Hinayanism, as noted above, which spread over Kambuja during the latter's decline. Vestiges of Indian culture still linger in Siam in art, architecture, names of offices, loan words, etc.

Hinduism entered into Arakan from Eastern India, and there is strong evidence to show that Hinduized Mahayanism infiltrated into Pagan from the same region. Brahminical gods and goddesses like Shiva, Vishnu, Durga, Ganesha, etc., were well known as is evidenced, among others, by the Nat Hlaung Kyaung of Pagan which enshrined Vishnu, and which is the only Hindu temple that has withstood the ravages of time. Prome (Pisanu Myo = city of Vishnu) was an important centre of Hindu culture. Brahminism seems to have made its mark in lower Burma at least as early as the sixth century A.D. and continued to exert its influence up till the fourteenth century, though it does not seem to have caught the imagination of the masses who were mostly Buddhists. Lower Burma was under the sway of a Hinduized dynasty, known as the Vikrama dynasty, during the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries of the Vikrama era. In Thaton, the land of the Talaings (Trikalinga), the people must have immigrated from Andhra-Kalinga, Tamralipta having played an important part as a port of exit. Legend associated two *Râjarshis* with the founding of the kingdom of Thaton. But Thaton acknowledged Hinayanism during the palmy days of Pagan. And when Anawrahta (Aniruddha of Pagan), who came to the throne in 1044 A.D., conquered Thaton in 1057 A.D., Thaton took its cultural vengeance on the conquering country by elbowing out both Hinduism and Mahayanism.

II

We have followed the fate of Hinduism in the Mon-Khmer countries. We now turn to the Malay Peninsula and the Malay Archipelago. The Malay civilization which was rudimentary in character, was greatly enriched by the Hindu civilization, though research has not been able to unearth all the connecting links of this transformation. From a Chinese account it can be gathered that Hinduism and with it Sanskrit reached the Peninsula by the

second century A.D. The Chinese records also refer to Hindu kingdoms (fifth century A.D.) in places which can now be identified with Keddah, Pahang, etc. The kings of Pahang added Varman to their names. We hear also of a king named Shri Varanarendra who sent an embassy to the Chinese Emperor Hia-Wu (454-465 A.D.). In addition to these evidences, actual remains of a Hindu temple (c. fourth century A.D.) have been discovered at the foot of the Keddah Peak, from which it is inferred that the people professed the Shaiva faith, for the images of Durgâ (?), Ganesha, and Nandi, as well as Yoni have been recovered from the temple, which has also yielded a Sanskrit inscription. At Perak, again, a seal with the name of a Hindu prince Shri Vishnuvarman has been discovered. At Phra No hill has been found a fine Vishnu image (c. sixth century A.D.). An old brick sanctuary at Caiya or Jaya is believed to have enshrined Shiva or Vishnu, though Buddha was introduced there as a secondary god.

There are also a few Brahminical temples in Nakhon Shri Thammarat where 'Hindu ceremonial was performed until about thirty years ago, and which are still in the care of a small colony of Brahmanas of Indian descent'. (R. C. Majumdar, *Suvarnadvipa*, Part II, p. 149).

One of these temples contains bronze images of Hindu gods such as Ganesha and Natarâja. In Malacca there is an image of Makara, perhaps the sole remnant of a Hindu temple.

Sumatra received her Hindu civilization very early; it may have begun two centuries before Christ. Sumatra is probably no other than the Suvarnadvipa of the Hindus. Sumatra attained her international fame under her Shailendra kings, whose domains often included the Malay Peninsula and almost all the Indonesian islands. They waged war against Ceylon and South India, though the Cholas had often the better of them. Java, too, in later days extended her supremacy in Sumatra. The Shailendra kings of Shri-vijaya were Buddhists leaning to Tantrayana. But Hinayanism prevailed in the island along with Hinduism till Muhammedanism made short work of both. The highlands of Padang and Tapanuli contain the ruins of many Hindu temples, from which have been recovered Hindu images in stone. Such remains, though rare, are found in other places as well.

The remains of Hindu culture discovered in Borneo carry us back to the early centuries of the Christian era. At Muara Kaman, three day's journey above Pelarang along the Mahakam river, has been found a golden image of Vishnu besides inscriptions (c. 400 A.D.) which mention Hindu kings like Mulavarman, Kundunga (Kaundinya?), Ashvavarman. Mulavarman performed a sacrifice called Vahu-suvarnakam, and made a gift of 20,000 cows. The Kameng cave in East Borneo has yielded some Hindu images (c. fourth century A.D.) which were secreted there, presumably as a protection against vandals. These include images of Shiva, Ganesha, Brahmâ, Skanda, Nandi, Agastya, and Mahâkalâ. There was indeed a flourishing period of Hinduization in Borneo. But later history could not fulfil the earlier promise, and Borneo lapsed back to savagery.

In Java, too, Hinduism had a chequered career, but it was fortunate enough to leave on the Javanese culture a more indelible mark. Before the advent of Hinduism Java was animistic, and animism still forms the basis of popular beliefs. The first beginnings of Hindu culture in Western Java can be traced back to the early days of the Christian era, though it did not persist later than the sixth century when it vanished leaving few traces. In middle Java, however, the influence of Indian culture became very pronounced by the seventh century. Shaivism predominated in the Javanese court. Early Javanese history knows little of Bud-

dhism and much less of its Hinayanic manifestations. Hiuen-tsang noted in the fifth century A.D., that the country was predominantly Hindu. Mahayanism of the *tântrika* school came later and became fused with Hinduism. Thus Kertangara, one of the kings, received the posthumous title of Shiva-Buddha. Buddhism seems to have flourished under the Sumatran rule, but when the country asserted her independence under the eastern Javanese kings in 860 A.D., Shaivism came into prominence, though it was very tolerant of Buddhism. One of the earliest law books of the Javanese is *Shiva-shâsana* (991 A.D.). Another law book entitled *Kutâra-mânava* is largely based on the *Manu-samhitâ*. Indonesia had her own version of the *Mahâbhârata* as well, and both the great epics of India supplied the *motifs* for Javanese art and architecture and themes for dramas.

Java has left many traces of her architectural greatness. Borobudur, the Buddhist temple, is really a wonderful achievement. But there are other equally noteworthy Hindu temples. Indian inspiration was in evidence in other fields of creative art as well. But Javanese creativity seems to have suddenly stopped with the advent of the Muhammedans, though the latter may not have directly interfered with the Javanese cultural life. Indonesian writers had a love and veneration for Sanskrit and they interspersed their vernacular compositions with Sanskrit verses even in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Of the Indonesian islands Bali has preserved her Hindu culture the best, though it would be more correct to say that this culture is really a mixture of Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism, Hinduism playing the higher part. The Balinese *Brahmândapurâna* (belonging to the fifth or the sixth century A.D.) links up a Kshatriya dynasty with an Indian sage Pulaha. This book must have been influenced by the *Vishnupurâna*.

III

Nearer home, Vijayasena of Bengal is said to have landed in Ceylon long before the Christian era and secured the throne through marriage with the local princess Kuveni. But Ceylon came to be dominated by Hinayana Buddhism after Ashoka's missionary activity, though the Tamil Hindus of South India were always on its trail, and even today play a dominating part in northern Ceylon.

It is extremely doubtful if Tibet was ever directly influenced by Hinduism to any considerable extent, though the *tântrika* Mahayanism in which Tibet shared after Shântarakshita's preaching, could not altogether ignore its Hindu affiliations. And even today there are Buddhist monasteries in the land in which Hindu deities receive worship under unfamiliar names.

The Khotanese trace their descent from Kuvera. Khotan is said to have been peopled by those who blinded Ashoka's son Kunal and had to leave India. Being on the overland trade route between China and South-western Asia as well as India, Khotan played an important part in the dissemination of Hindu culture. The excavations of Sir Aurel Stein unearthed traces of Hindu settlements under the sands of Gobi. Documents about 2,000 years old, written in Indian language and Indian characters are there side by side with frescoes of Buddha. Indian sculpture and architecture discovered there cannot be mistaken even in that remote period.

Indian influences or, to be more precise, Mahayana Buddhism entered China through three routes—through Burma and Yunnan, by the sea route via Sumatra and Java, and along the silk-trade route in Central Asia, passing through Khotan. The first historic missionary to China seems to have been Kashyapa Matanga who went there in 67 A.D. furnished with Buddhist images and scriptures. As acquaintance developed, many Chinese scholars came to

India to study Buddhist scriptures at first hand. In 418 A.D. Fa Hien was fellow passenger with 200 Hindus bound for Canton. Hiuen-tsang, who came to India in 629 A.D. and returned in 645 A.D., and Itsing, who followed soon after, were two other noted travellers. On the other hand many Indian monks went to China to preach Buddhism. Besides, during Harshavardhana's reign there were at Loyang 3,000 Indian monks and 10,000 Indian families. Through such channels Buddhism and with it Hinduism did not certainly fail to inspire Chinese creativity. But unlike Indonesia or Cambodia, China had reached a high state of civilization before she came into contact with India, so that she was never completely Indianized, though she had to recognize the supremacy of Indian religious thought and the modes of expression of the Indian ideas. Thus Hindu Yoga brought into existence *Zen* or the Chinese *Dhyâna* School. It was probably through Indian contact that the Chinese ideograph came to possess phonetic values, which in turn created the Japanese alphabet in the eighth century A.D. Chinese theatres, too, may have been influenced by Indian pantomimic performances. And traces of Indian deities are not rare in China, while writings in Indian characters have been discovered in more than one place.

Indian culture reached Japan from China by way of Korea. Japanese culture and unity were achieved during the seventh century through the Chinese influence, previous to which there was no considerable civilization. With Chinese Buddhism Hinduism, too, had an indirect entry into Japan. It is, perhaps, too much to assume that the Japanese had any direct inspiration from India apart from what trickled down through Khotan. But as A. Coomaraswami remarks:

It seems as though the Japanese must have depended in some degree directly upon Indian sources ; it would be impossible otherwise to explain such iconographic parallels as that of the Jikoku Yen (=Dhritarâshtra) of the Kondo, standing on a couching demon with the Kuvera Yaksha of Bharhut ; and difficult to account for the great admixture of Brahminical, especially many-armed, forms that is characteristic of the mixed Shinto-Buddhist pantheon. The Japanese *torii* may be related to the Indian *torana*. (*History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 154).

As a matter of fact, there arose in the Japan of the ninth century a sect which proclaimed the familiar Hindu doctrine of the unity of life in the Absolute, believed in Buddha as a particular manifestation of Divinity, and gathered round the image of Buddha a host of gods and goddesses straight out of Hinduism—the elephant-god Ganesha (god Shoden) who gets the earliest worship at dawn, Shiva with his characteristic trappings of skulls, snakes, and tiger skin, etc., Kâli, Sarasvati with her *veenâ*, and Lakshmi. It is thought that *veenâ* has left its trace even in the present-day *biwa*, the favourite musical instrument of Japan.

There are strong evidences to show that Hinduism travelled from India and Indonesia to the Polynesian islands and from thence to central America where it gave rise to the Maya civilization. It may have also reached America through the Aleutian islands. The oldest loan words in the Malay-Polynesian world are words for religious, moral, and intellectual ideas coming from India. Dr. Kruijt notices that

In Siam, the highest God is called *Duata*, which is also found among the Macassars and Buginese as Dewata, among the Dayaks of Borneo as *Javata*, *Jata*, among the people of the Philippine islands as *Divata*, *Devata*, *Diuata*.

Amahai in Seram has yielded a golden image of Shiva, while Tato in the Timor islands has given us stone images of Trimurti and Kâla. Traces of Shiva worship have been discovered in South Celebes. Its language and alphabet also betray an Indian impression. The Samba islanders worship their stone Devas. New Guinea has also yielded traces of Shaivism to critical scholars. In the Philippines have been discovered

a copper *Linga* and a golden image of a female deity sitting cross-legged.

About the Indian origin of the Maya civilization, Prof. Raman Menon, Curator of the National Museum, Mexico, writes:

> The Maya human types are like those of India. The irreproachable technique of their reliefs, the sumptuous head-dress, and ostentatious buildings on high, the system of construction, all speak of India and the Orient.

Another writer adds:

> Whence came the highly cultured aliens whose civilization is represented by Quetzalcoatl? They were evidently sea-farers who settled on the coast lands and introduced the dragon beliefs so like those found in India, China, and Japan; they introduced various arts and crafts and well-defined laws, and their Quetzalcoatl priests were penitents given to self-mortifications like the Indian Brahmins; they hated war and violence, and instead of sacrificing animals, made offerings of flowers, jewels, etc., to their deities. That they came under Hindu or Buddhist influence, as did sections of the Chinese people, is a view which cannot be lightly dismissed except by those who cling to the belief in spontaneous generation in different parts of the world of the same groups of highly complex belief and practices. (Mackenzie).

IV

One of the eight dialects in which the Boghaz-koi inscriptions (1400 B.C.) of Mesopotamia are written, is said to be Indian. And in this occur the names of such Aryan gods as Mitra, Varuna, Indra, and the twin Nâsatyas. In the letters from Tel-el-Amarna, which belong to the same period, there are references to Aryan names like Artatama, Tusratta (Dasharatha), and Suttarna. In Palestine there were such names as Biridashva (Brihadashva), Yasdata (Yashodatta), and Shuwardata (Suryadatta). In Babylonia, too, the Kassite princes and deities had such appellations as Maruttas, Shimalia (cf. Himalaya), Daksh (Daksha), etc. In the Boghaz-koi inscriptions are also found words for Hindu numerals like *aika*, *teras*, *panza*, *satta*, and *nav*.

Hindu influence in South-west Asia persisted long after the early Aryan period through Indian traders and trading colonies. And through Persia, Asia Minor, and Arabia Hindu thoughts and modes of expression infiltrated into Egypt and the Mediterranean regions including Greece and Italy. Seals and coins of the Mohen-jo Daro types have been discovered in Babylonia; and if the Sumerians were an immigrant people, as they are supposed to be by some scholars, then the claim of Mohen-jo Daro to be recognized as the cradle of civilization cannot be easily set aside. And Mohen-jo Daro, it must be remembered, represents an autochthonous Hindu civilization—call it Aryan, Dravidian, or Aryo-Dravidian, whatever you like.

It has been held that commerce by sea between India and Babylonia dates back to as early a period as 3,000 B.C. This is proved by the presence of Indian teak in the ruins of Ur. Besides, the word for muslin in the Babylonian list of cloths is Sindhu. Others doubt the existence of such a pre-historic maritime connection, though evidences in favour of this are quite numerous after the seventh century B.C. Indian ideas and words passed into Greece through the Indian trade. Besides trade relations Europe and India came to know each other through other channels. A large contingent of Xerexes's army came from India. In the empire of Darius was included the north-western portions of India. And Ashoka's empire extended far beyond Punjab and Kashmir. Ashoka's missionary activity brought him into close contact with the Mediterranean countries. The Buddhists had their shrines and monasteries in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and Asia Minor, long after Ashoka. As days rolled on, Indian Buddhism became increasingly suffused with Hindu ideas, so that the triumph of Buddhism meant in part the ascendancy of Hinduism as well. Furthermore, South India, which was predominantly Hindu, had direct trade relations with Egypt and Rome, and could not fail to leave a Hindu impress on the manners and customs and modes of thought in those countries.

Stray facts gathered from the pages of history lend ample support to the supposition that the Hindus and Hinduism of old had a brilliant career in the West. Hiuen-tsang noticed that in the chief towns of Persia Hindus were settled enjoying rights to practise their own religion. According to him very many people professed Shaivism as far west as Baluchistan. Alexander is said to have taken some Hindus with him from India. From a Syrian legend we learn that Krishna worship prevailed in Armenia as early as the second century B.C. There were in the second century B.C. temples erected to Hindu Gods like Krishna on the upper banks of the Euphrates. Under the dynasty of Arsacidas, the god Mithra (Mitra) extended His empire to the borders of the Aegean Sea and became well known in Greece. The mysteries of Mithra found their way into the Roman empire. Julian the Apostate, who occupied the throne of the Caesars, was a worshipper of Mithra. Modelled heads of Indians of about the fifth century B.C. have been found in Memphis. Lucian (second century A.D.) makes Demetrius the Greek philosopher to give up property and proceed to India to learn under the Brahmins. Clement of Alexandria (died c. 220 A.D.) knew the difference between Hinduism and Buddhism. In the reign of Constantine, Metrodorus is said to have journeyed to India to study the science and philosophy of the Hindus. Damascius mentions that certain Brahmins visited Alexandria (500 A.D.). Hippolytus, Bishop of Ostia, gives an account of Hindu thought including renunciation and asceticism. Plotinus attempted to visit India to learn Indian philosophy. Alberuni (977-1048 A.D.) translated many Sanskrit works which passed to Europe through the Moslem world.

Thus through various channels Hindu ideas percolated into the Christian and Muhammedan worlds bringing into existence new beliefs and giving new turns to existing ones. Renunciation, Yoga, absoluteness of the Ultimate Reality, unity of life, mind, and spirit, indestructibility of the soul, rebirth, all-pervasiveness of spirit, and such other typically Hindu doctrines are thus to be met with everywhere. In fact, it was Hinduism that ruled the ancient world of thought, culture, and religion.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DOCTRINE OF MAYA

By P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A.

The doctrine of *mâyâ* (the theory of super-imposition), sometimes inexactly described as the theory of illusion, is the most distinct and celebrated doctrine associated with the name of the great idealist philosopher Shri Shankara. It is the pivotal point of Advaita on its theoretical as well as on its practical side. With characteristic humility Shankara holds the view that he derived the doctrine from the triple texts (*Prasthâna-traya*). A clear and a critical understanding of the implications of the doctrine is most necessary for a sound study of Advaita. The metaphysical soundness of the doctrine depends on its intelligibility in terms of logic and experience.

It has its dim origins and outlines in pre-Shankara thought of Bâdarâyana, Bhartrihari and Gaudapâda. It has received a clear and lucid expression at the hands of Shankara. The chief pre-occupation of post-Shankara thinkers Chitsukha, Shri Harsha, Madhusudana, Vidyaranya, and Appayya Dikshita has been to clarify and consolidate the several implications of the doctrine. The exposition is mostly dialectic and the form is syllogistic. They refute the

criticisms directed against the doctrine by the rival systems. Most of the post-Shankara thinkers are logicians *par excellence*.

The doctrine has been cried up and cried down. Contemporary criticism of the doctrine has ranged from unmeasured praise to bitter ridicule. The theistic schools of Vedanta have all directed their attack against this doctrine.

The doctrine is set forth by Shankara in his introduction to the commentary on the *Vedânta-sutras*. Shankara's monism admits the ultimate reality of one category, namely, Brahman. The other religio-philosophical categories—God, souls, and the world—are derived from Brahman, the ultimate. The principle that accounts for the diversification and appearance of these entities is called *mâyâ*. The jurisdiction of *mâyâ* is all that falls outside Brahman. *Mâyâ* is a principle which is positive, and beginningless. It accounts for diversity in the world. The one Brahman is suppressed, and in its place the world of plurality is seen. The act of suppression and that of the showing up of the many in place of the one, are the twofold activities of *mâyâ* (*âvarana* and *vikshepa*). If it is not positive it cannot produce the many. It is the material cause of the world of plurality (*upâdâna kârana*). Waiving aside for a moment the different theories about the locus of *mâyâ*, let us admit that the individual soul is its locus. *Mâyâ*, being of the nature of ignorance, is a quality and it can pertain only to a conscious being. It is a *chetana-dharma*. It must have a content also (*vishaya*). Brahman is the content of *mâyâ*. Here it may be objected to by the logician that, before the operation of the principle of *mâyâ*, there cannot be individual souls in the plural. *Mâyâ* is unintelligible without the positing of the several loci. To avoid the defect of reciprocal dependence, it is assumed that it is *anâdi*-beginningless. It is beginningless but not eternal. It can be put an end to by knowledge, and only by knowledge.

Its status in the Advaita metaphysics is unique. It is not real and ultimate as Brahman. The real is that which is not sublated in all three times. It never ceases to be. The non-sublation of Brahman is due to Its self-luminosity. All sublations in the world are possible because of the dependence involved in knowing a thing. To know the rope aright, and not delusively cognize it as snake, depends on light and the proper sense organs. That is not the case with regard to Brahman.

The world of plurality is not real in the sense Brahman is. Nor is the world unreal in the sense of absolute non-existence (*atyantâsat*). Absolute negation, as for instance the barren woman's son or the sky lotus, has no existence except as words. *Mâyâ* has a status in between the real and the unreal. It cannot be both at the same time, because such a position goes against the fundamental law of thought, viz, the law of contradiction. So it is described as *anirvachaniyâ*, indeterminate. The indeterminacy is of a restricted type. It is indeterminate in terms of the real or the unreal It has the characteristics of both the categories. 'The entire world of social intercourse, the apparatus of human knowledge, and Vedic statements pre-suppose the doctrine,' Shankara argues, 'that they are unintelligible without this pre-supposition.' The *pramâna* for the doctrine of *mâyâ* is human experience itself. The fact remains with us. The persistent confusion of the inert with the *Âtman*, and *Âtman* with the inert is seen in life. When the body is ill or well one says, I am well or ill, when the body lacks a sense of sight or hearing, one says, I am blind or deaf. We, too, well know that the senses belong to the category of the not-self as any piece of external matter. In spite of the diametrically opposing characteristics of the self and the not-self, we still identify the one with the other. Thus there is the experienced confusion of identity between the self and the not-self, and a consequent confusion of their characters. Swami Vivekananda has put the

issue in foolproof language. '*Mâyâ* is a simple statement of facts; it is what we are and what is around us.'

Shankara argues with great persuasive skill and cogency that unless there is super-imposition, i.e., the identification of the *Âtman* with the *anâtman*, it is not possible to have knowledge or *vyavahâra* in general. Unless one identifies oneself with the sense organs one cannot become the knowing subject. The subject-object relation, pre-supposed in knowledge, implies the need of *mâyâ*. For this and other efforts, reciprocal super-imposition is necessary and imperative.

If the world of souls and matter is the product of nescience, i.e., *mâyâ*, what exactly is the relation between the world and Brahman? Is the relation that of cause and effect, or one of manifestation of the potential into the actual, or the relation of ground and consequent? Theistic schools of Vedanta represent the Lord as creating the world of names and forms with the help of matter. God is hailed as the *nimitta kârana* of the world. Such an hypothesis is not free from defects. Some of the notable defects are: the Lord, on such an account, is no better than the average mechanic limited by the material at His disposal. He is no longer free from the responsibility of the existence of evil, and thus He forfeits His title to impartiality and justice. Creation implies a motive. To attribute motive to God is to imply that He has ends to attain. Such an assumption goes against His perfection. To deny motive and describe creation as the very nature of God is to reduce Him to a tendency. So the Advaitin does not assert that the world and Brahman are two entities. The position that God transforms Himself into the world is not free from defects. If God becomes the world, He gets tainted by its defects. For what purpose does He do so? To have purposes is to be incomplete. It cannot be held that God changes in one part only. This position disintegrates the very nature of God. Shankara, being fully alive to the defects of *parinâmavâda* and creationist doctrines, resorts to a third and unique way of stating it. It goes by the name of *vivartavâda*. Cause and effect, on Advaita analysis, are not two different things. The cause-effect relation involves a contradiction at its heart. It does serve some purpose, but in the last resort it is indefensible. The contradictory nature of this category, as that of several others, rests on the self-discrepant nature of relation. All predication in the world involves relation. Relation is either a quality or a thing. If it is a quality, it needs others to connect it with things, which in their turn require some others. Thus we land in infinite regress. If it is a thing, we have no connection but things. Such in brief is the dialectic of relation.

According to the author of the *Vedânta-sutras*, the world has no reality apart from Brahman. It is non-different from Brahman. But this does not mean that it is identical. The world is the consequent, Brahman is the ground. Non-difference is interpreted by Vachaspati to mean not identity, but denial of difference. The world, as effect, shares with the cause the negation of unreality, and it differs from the cause in falling short of reality. Brahman is the sole independent Reality that is eternal. The world is an effect, hence it is not eternal. It needs explanation unlike Brahman which is self-explanatory. The world is not unreal (*asat*). If it were so, it would have nothing in common with Brahman and could not be Its product. Brahman is not dependent on the world, but the world is dependent on Brahman. The effect has no existence apart from the cause. The cause is in no way affected by Brahman. The little order that we find in the world, and the workings of Nature, are possible because of Brahman. The causal rigidity in the world is possible because of Brahman. The reality of the world is Brahman. Everything in this world is Brahman.

Traditional students of Advaita do not see the positive significance attached to the world. They stress a great deal the negative element. They define and describe Brahman by negating the world. The infinite nature of Brahman is derived by negating the finite. They erect an antithesis between existence and reality. Brahman, they say, is the annulment of the world. The trend of their argument is as follows: If this was not so Shankara would not have started his commentary with a dissertation on super-imposition. It is argued that in the stress on the negative method lies the significance of the *adhyâsa bhâshya.*

The theory that on the acceptance of Advaita, the world of plurality commits suicide, is not intelligible. Even for being negated it must be some thing. To the upholders of philosophic unity the traditional position does admit of an improved interpretation. If the world is regarded as illusory, it ceases to have any significance. The world is a section and a semblance of reality. In the section there cannot *ex hypothesis* be presented a synoptic view of Reality, but the whole cannot but be in the part too, sustaining and informing it.

> The appearance is neither entirely an appearance, nor has it a distinct reality in a fantastic realm of its own. It is real, but it derives its reality from, and is reducible to, the Absolute.[1]

In the words of Sir S. Radhakrishnan:

> The world is not so much negated as re-interpreted. It is transfigured in the intuition of Brahman. Unreal the world is, but illusory it is not.[2]

If the world is illusory, our very laudable attempt to realize 'our selves' through methods like intuition, contemplation, etc., would be of no value. They must be well-settled causes to help us to realize our selves. If it were not so, love, heroism, and asceticism could not prepare us for that life. All ethical endeavour would lose its significance. It is because of the Reality in appearances that there is law and order in the workings of Nature. Brahman is not the negation of the world.

> Reality and existence are not to be set against each other as 'metaphysical contraries. Nothing on earth is utterly perfect or utterly without perfection. Those who have the vision of perfection strive continually to increase the perfection and diminish imperfection.[3]

If the world is illusory Brahman will be a negative infinite and a pure nothing. Everything here is Brahman, say the scriptures. The Absolute includes the finite.

> It is the self-determining principle which manifests itself in all determinations of the finite without losing the unity with itself. The Absolute involves the diversified universe as the universal involves the particular.[4]

It is a hasty logic that holds the One as real and the many as an illusion. The correct step will be to hold that the One reveals Itself in the many.[5] Shankara observes that the entire world of names and forms, in so far as it has Brahman as its essence, is true; if regarded as self-dependent, it is untrue[6]. 'It is real not in being ultimate but in being a form, an expression of the ultimate.'

The one main argument that is directed against the doctrine of *mâyâ*, is the fault of the excluded middle. The realist holds that there is no middle ground between Reality and unreality. The answer of the resourceful Advaitin is, however, experience. Human experience is itself evidence for it. Another point that is urged against the doctrine, is that it does not positively put forth any view and is bankrupt of any explanation. To describe a thing as *anirvachaniya* is no answer to the problem. The Advaitin points out that reflection and logical cogitation reveal how in the last resort there is at the

[1] S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, *An Advaitin's Plea for Continuity* in the journal of the Madras University, Vol. X, no. I.

[2] S. Radhakrishnan, *The Vedanta*, p. 149.

[3] S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, p. 81.

[4] S. Radhakrishnan, *The Vedanta Philosophy and the Doctrine of Mâyâ, International Journal of Ethics*, July 1914.

[5] S. Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 110.

[6] Shankara's com. on *Chhândogya*, VI, iii. 2, 'sarvam cha nâmarupâdivikârajâtam sadâtmanâ eva satyam, svatastu anritam.'

root of finite cognition a certain core of irreducible unintelligibility. In the words of A. N. Whitehead, 'For all its effort human thought only dimly discerns, it misdescribes, and it wrongly associates.'[7] The Advaitin is alive to this defect. He does not dogmatically assert any point of view as final. He never recklessly repudiates any defect which is incidental to philosophic theories. He is scientific in his view. He criticizes the different views and shows up the falsity in their argument. The methodology of Advaita is critical. It passes in review the different conceptions of the universe and criticizes them in turn, one after another. In this criticism it never fails to note their varying fulness and worth. The lower category is criticized in the light of the higher in which it finds its fulfilment. It is a progressive discovery of truth.

[7] Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 208.

VIKRAMADITYA

BY SWAMI DHYANATMANANDA

Vikramaditya Sakari, is one of the most notable figures in ancient Indian history. He seems to enjoy a greater amount of popularity even today than many of his successors or predecessors.

As to his identity, students of history, after strenuous labour, have succeeded in establishing it. 'He,' (Chandra Gupta II of the Gupta dynasty) observes Dr. Smith, 'has a better claim than any other sovereign to be regarded as the original of the mythical king of that name who figures so largely in Indian legends.' It would not be out of place, therefore, to examine the arguments that are put forth in support of his identity.

A critical study of Indian literature will go a great way to substantiate our theory. Kalidasa, the celebrated court poet of Vikramaditya, speaks of the King of Magadha as:

असौ शरण्यः शरणोन्मुखाना-
मगाधसत्त्वो मगधप्रतिष्ठः ।
राजा प्रजारंजनलब्धवर्णः
परन्तपो नाम यथार्थनामा ॥
कामं नृपाः सन्तु सहस्रशोऽन्ये
राजन्वतीमाहुरनेन भूमिं ।
नक्षत्रताराग्रहसंकुलाऽपि
ज्योतिष्मती चन्द्रमसैव रात्रिः ॥

This Emperor of Magadha is thus described in the *Svayamvara* ceremony of Indumati (*Raghu.*, Canto VI). Although the Magadhian monarch, in spite of his many virtues, was rejected by the bride, we have reasons to believe that the person referred to is certainly one of the greatest ancient Indian princes. But that he was not Samudra Gupta will be clear from another reference in the *Purvamegha* where the poet says, दिङ्नागानां पथिपरिहरन्स्थूलहस्तावलेपान् ।

This Dingnaga, according to Mallinatha, is a celebrated Buddhist logician and a disciple of Vasubandhu, a contemporary and a friend of Samudra Gupta. Further, no evidence has as yet been discovered that can lead us to think that Samudra Gupta did ever assume the title of Vikramaditya. On the contrary, Samudra Gupta has been singled out as Parâkramânka—an epithet found on his coins. He is further known as Sarvarâjochhettâ. The title Sakari—destroyer of the Sakas—is very closely associated with Vikramaditya. That Chandra Gupta II was the celebrated victor of the Saka Satraps of Saurashtra or Kathiawar, is proved by the celebrated Banabhatta, who speaks of this incident as—अरिपुरे च परकलत्र-कामुकम् कामिनीवेशगुप्तश्च चन्द्रगुप्तः शकपतिम् अशातयदिति ।

Moreover, the titles Shri Vikrama, Simha Vikrama, Ajita Vikrama, Vikramanka, and Vikramaditya actually occur on Chandra Gupta's coins. From this numismatic evidence, Sir R. G. Bhandarkar has identified Chandra Gupta with the traditional Vikramaditya Sakari, the Sun-valour, the destroyer of the Sakas. Certain chiefs of the Canarese districts, who claimed descent from Chandra Gupta Vikramaditya referred to their great ancestor as उज्जयिनीपुरवराधीश्वर, the lord of Ujjaini, the best of cities, as well as पाटलिपुरवराधीश्वर, lord of Patali, the best of cities. The author of *Kathâsaritsâgara* represents Vikramaditya as ruling at Pataliputra:

विक्रमादित्य इत्यासीत् राजा पाटलीपुत्रके ।

These evidences have almost conclusively proved that the celebrated Vikramaditya Sakari is no other than Chandra Gupta II of the imperial Gupta dynasty. Tradition associates his name with the capital at Ujjaini. We have reasons to believe that besides Pataliputra he had other capitals as well. Paramartha, the biographer of Vasubandhu, refers to Ayodhya as the capital of Vikramaditya, while Hiuen-tsang represents Sravasti as the seat of the famous king. Ujjaini seems to have become the second capital of the empire after the extinction of the Saka Satraps and annexation of their province to the Gupta dominions. It is quite likely that big empires should have more than one capital. Rome and Constantinople formed the two most important cities of the ancient Roman Empire.

As to his reign we possess a number of dated inscriptions so that its limits may be defined with more accuracy than those of his predecessors. His accession should be placed before 881 A.D. and his death in or about 418 or 414 A.D. Much light is thrown on the character of Chandra Gupta's administration by the narrative of Fa Hien and the inscriptions that have hitherto been discovered. 'The inhabitances,' observes the Chinese pilgrim, 'are rich and prosperous, and vie with one another in practice of benevolence and righteousness. The people are numerous and happy; they have not to register their households or attend to any magistrates and their rules; only those who cultivate the royal lands have to pay a portion of the gain from it. The king governs without decapitation or other corporal punishments. Criminals are simply fined lightly or heavily, according to the circumstances of each case. Throughout the whole country the people do not kill any living creature, nor drink any intoxicating liquor.' Gold and silver as well as copper were in currency; besides, cowries were used. Cowries and copper coins were used in smaller and gold and silver coins in larger transactions.

The great king himself was a devout Vaishnava (Parama-bhâgavata). Yet so magnanimous was his outlook that he felt no scruple in appointing men of other sects to high offices. His general Amrakardava, 'the hero of a hundred fights,' appears to have been a Buddhist, while his minister of peace and war, Saba-Virasena, and, perhaps, his *Mantrin* or High Counsellor, Sikharasvamin, were Shaivas. This clearly indicates his wonderful toleration—an ideal ever unrealised in the Western countries.

Regarding the machinery of Government we have no detailed information. But the inscriptions help us in this work considerably. The head of the State was the king. He was looked upon as 'Paramadaivata,' the supreme divinity, 'Lokadhâmadeva,' a god dwelling on earth. Thus the gradual progress towards the growth of an absolute monarchy was almost complete by this time. The Maurya Emperor was styled as Devanampiya Piyadashi, the Kushana Emperor as Devaputra Shai Shahanushai, and the Gupta Emperor as 'Paramadaivata' and 'Lokadhâmadeva'.

Be that as it may, the reign of Chandra Gupta Vikramaditya is un-

doubtedly one of the most brilliant periods of ancient Indian history. This has been clearly proved by numismatic, epigraphic, and literary evidences—both internal and external. Just as great literary geniuses produced the Elizabethan and Victorian schools of letters, so also did this great reign witness a marvellous revival of Sanskrit learning. Sanskrit once more began to gain grounds from the days of the great Kushana Emperor Kanishka. The celebrated author of *Buddha-charita* (Ashvaghosha) as well as the distinguished writers of *Charaka* and *Sushruta,* treatises on Hindu medicine, and many other great writers in Sanskrit belonged to the Kushana period. But, perhaps, the highest pinnacle of glory in Sanskrit literature was achieved during this period. Kalidasa, the greatest of the ancient Indian poets, 'lived and wrote in the fifth century. His literary activity extended over a long period, probably not less than thirty years'. It is most likely that he began to write either late in the reign of Chandra Gupta II or early in the reign of Kumara Gupta I. His writings alone are sufficient to immortalize this great reign. Yet there were other writers who occupy almost equally eminent position in the history of Sanskrit literature. Mention may be made in this connection of the dramas entitled *Little Clay Cart* (*Mrichchhakatikâ*), *Mudrârâkshasa*, etc. Prof. Hillebrandt assigns the composition of the latter to the reign of Chandra Gupta II. The late Sir R. G. Bhandarkar observes that the period was distinguished by 'a general literary impulse,' the effects of which were visible in poetry as well as in law books and many other forms of literature. Mr. Kaye holds that 'the period when mathematics flourished in India commenced about 400 A.D'.

As to architecture, sculpture, painting, and music, we have the clearest evidences to speak with authority that in these branches of human creativity as well, this great reign achieved a marvellous success. Some of the most successful paintings of the Ajanta caves may be ascribed to this period. That the country enjoyed peace and prosperity is clearly brought out when the great poet Kalidasa exclaims :

न किलानुययुस्तस्य राजानो रक्षितुर्यशः ।
व्यावृत्ता यत्परस्वेभ्यः श्रुतौ तस्करता स्थिता ॥

(*Raghuvamsha*, I. 27).

This marvellous brilliance is seldom witnessed in any other reign than that of this conqueror of the Western Satraps. This also is the reason why 'more living men cherish his memory today than have ever heard the names of' any of his predecessors or successors.

THE PROBLEM OF SOIL EROSION

BY PROF. A. K. DUTT, M.SC.

Civilization is the product of man's struggle with Nature, and, as such, the progress of this civilization depends upon his continuous supremacy over Nature while respecting her usual course of behaviour. Any slight discord as a result of man's negligence and shortcoming makes Nature rebel and break through human efforts to control her, with disastrous effects. Soil erosion, resulting from man's endeavour to curb Nature against her ways, has been responsible for the destruction of many bygone civilizations and empires now buried under barren wastes.

The untiring zeal of man to probe into the mysteries of the universe has brought home the truth that the earth was in a molten condition ere it came to its present state. Before plant and animal

life dawned upon its surface, the hard rock was acted upon and transformed into pulverized soil by various physical, chemical, and biological agencies, such as alternate freezing and thawing, wind and water, and animal and vegetation, etc. Of all the agencies concerned in soil formation, water has played the most important role in effecting the chemical decomposition of rocks by carbon dioxide and organic acids dissolved in it. It is upon the fine soil, not upon the hard rock, that plants thrive and multiply. This dynamic phenomenon, which acting through thousands of years has made the earth suitable for colonization by plants, is known as geological erosion or denudation. Nature looks to the protection of the soil which has sucked the blood out of her incessantly for years, and she does this through plants which, by the luxuriant growth of their leaves and roots, and by the power of adaptability they develop in response to any change in the environment, appear to check further onset of geological erosion. And yet some amount of geological erosion is always occurring, which plays a beneficent role by removing the surface layer of plant-covered soil as it becomes exhausted and is no longer required by plants, and replacing this old worn-out skin with a corresponding fraction of new soil formed by slow weathering of the underlying rock. In this way a virgin soil maintains an equilibrium between denudation and soil formation under the environmental conditions prevailing where it is, so that, unless this equilibrium is put to perilous stress from without, it preserves more or less constant depth and character indefinitely. But the attempt of man to live by eliminating the plants, easily disturbs this equilibrium and accelerates soil-loss at a much faster rate than soil can be formed from the lifeless parent material lying beneath. This man-accelerated erosion is known as 'soil erosion'.

Soil erosion is not an inherent property of any mature and fertile soil; it is a property induced most commonly by the activities of man. Were it not true, virgin soil covered with rich grass or forest, which exhibits no appreciable erosion until the interference of man, would have disappeared long ago. So long as man lived wild with the wild-life resources of Nature, soil erosion was altogether out of the question. But when he began to think himself as a distinct element of this universe, the idea of living by struggle came into his head as the first lesson from Nature—resulting in the clearing of forests to obtain timber for shelter that marked out the boundary of his existence, and for fuel that warmed his body and kept out the wild animals. This clearing of forest lands was at first carried out on a small scale until man was familiar with the plants that could be grown for food and raiment, and with the harmless animals that could be tamed for his benefit. With the beginning of cultivation, more forests were cut down to provide lands for this purpose, while rich grass lands were opened up as grazing grounds for their cattle. Man learnt from plants the ways of obtaining the necessaries of life from the soil; but, unlike plants, he neglected his sacred task of paying back to the soil the interest in terms of fertility that would maintain a stable soil for his exploitation. In the early days of his struggle with the soil, man lived in a gypsy community, moving from place to place with his cattle as the pastures were over-grazed and the fertility of the cultivated lands fell below a certain level and crops became too scanty. He then abandoned the plots to increasing deterioration through the hill graziers and also through rain and wind. This, however, had often a good result. For this primitive system, which kept small forest patches under cultivation for a few years and then left them to be reclothed by the regeneration of natural vegetation, often proved successful in usefully restoring the fertility of the soil. But in arid and semi-arid regions, regrowth of the natural flora, once des-

troyed, proved too difficult under the low rainfall occurring there.

The relation between vegetation and soil is more natural and helpful to evolution than that between man and soil. Plants protect the soil from rain and wind, and enrich its fertility on decay ; soil, on the other hand, serves as a foothold for plant roots and a storehouse of 'reserve' food. Rain-drops falling on grass or forest are held up by the leaves, which mitigates the beating action of the rain-water and guides it gently into the soil floor to replenish the underground water supply, which later appears as springs to replenish the rivers during the dry season. The small quantities of water running off from such areas are largely free from silt and do not constitute any appreciable menace to the population living in the plains. But when man thrusts his presence upon the soil and destroys the natural vegetation, he easily facilitates the action of the rain-water to remove the most fertile and most absorptive surface soil on which rests the foundation of many future generations, and sheet erosion begins. The shower of next year falls upon the fresh layer of soil which was exposed on the surface by the previous shower and which is less absorbent than the eroded layer ; the run-off water increases in volume and eroding capacity, giving rise, with time, to innumerable rills, which join together to form rivulets, and rivulets become gullies which coalesce to become chasms that tear away the unprotected soil in torrents and penetrate deep into the barren sub-soil, leaving ugly scars on the landscape that strike the tourist with the depth of devastation wrought by the virulent forces of Nature.

Sheet erosion is the precursor of gully erosion, without which the inevitable, harmful consequences of the former escape the notice of man. The enormous quantity of rainfall run-off and soil-loss which might remain *in situ* in the absence of maladjustment between human society and its environment, is discharged into the natural drainage channels feeding the rivers and streams, which commence to flow menacingly as their beds rise and continue to rise with each year's deposition of suspended material eroded from the hills.

Shifting cultivation, as practised by the primitive people, was unable to meet all the requirements of increasing settlements destined to attain greater cultural heights and was consequently replaced by the art of continuous cultivation which enabled organized communities to develop in India, China, Iran, Egypt, Italy, Greece, and other regions. These communities quickly studied Nature and contrived new and newer devices to ease their struggle for existence—cultivating the soil by irrigation wherever there was shortage of water supply, and establishing schools and hamlets, towns and beautiful mansions. But the ancient people could not attune their art with Nature's ways, and the interest which was returned to the soil by careful cultivation and manuring fell too short to appease the revolting Nature disposed to punish man for his wilful acts.. These civilizations, which were based upon continuous cultivation, rapidly exhausted the soil and carried out more promiscuous deforestation to secure new land for the rapidly growing population, without thinking for a moment how the source of their strength and prosperity was being precipitated towards decline. Soil erosion was given a free hand to play its relentless game with the greatest achievements of the ancient, sweeping out of existence one civilization after another that contributed nothing substantial to the advancement of mankind except a tale of their painful suffering and extinction. The deserts of North China, Iran, Mesopotamia, and North Africa; the fall of the Roman Empire, and the ruins of bygone civilizations now unearthed in Central America, Columbia, Ceylon, and other tropical regions have all resulted from the destructive effects of soil erosion.

Soil erosion soon set to work at other parts of the world as the light of civili-

zation of the advanced nations reached the shores of countries where man was still wandering as an unimportant servant of Nature. More rapid exhaustion of the soil began in those newly enlightened regions to satisfy the demands of the liberator and the liberated, and the pressure on the land became gradually intensified as commerce was set up between one country and another.

Towards the closing of the fifteenth century the people of Europe sailed their ships over vast seas and oceans and discovered new lands where Nature still reigned supreme. The inexhaustible resources of those virgin lands allured them to settle down in large numbers. They quickly upset the balance that Nature had so long maintained between soil formation and soil erosion, creating a situation quite alarming. In the north-eastern parts of the United States thousands of acres of forest land were cleared for timber, much of which was burnt for the early potash industry that fetched fat profits from Europe for the settlers. Further west, north-west, and south much havoc was done over large tracts of forest lands for cultivation, lumbering, and 'boxing' for turpentine. Indiscriminate deforestation for agricultural lands and pastures, over-grazing by animals, and the practice of a type of agriculture that was found suitable to conserve the soil only in Europe are all common contributing factors to soil erosion in the colonies. As a matter of fact, uncontrolled clearing of the natural flora has been partly responsible for the disappearance of diverse wild life from many parts of the world. The pioneers lived in a time of plenty when immediate use, rather than conservation of resources, was the predominant idea in their minds. Man longed to enjoy more and more the riches and luxuries of life, and the Industrial Revolution opened up new possibilities of exploitation to the people of Europe, who, strengthened by the discoveries and inventions of science, established their supremacy over the weaker nations of their times. Money poured into the colonies and dominions, urging the local inhabitants to produce more and more agricultural and forest products without regard to encouraging appropriate reclamation measures to control erosion. Artificial fertilizers were indeed put at the disposal of the agriculturists to double and triple their yields, but very little was then realized of the insidious and mischievous process of soil erosion running over every country with accelerated momentum. Fertilizers may temporarily augment soil productivity, but they cannot replace the soil washed away bodily into the rivers and seas.

Water erosion is very active in the tropics and sub-tropics. The consequence of unchecked water erosion is an accelerated run-off and soil-wash, which latter silts stream channels, reservoirs, dams, and ditches, gradually damaging their utility for navigation, irrigation, hydro-electric power, and town-water supply, etc. The fertile soil material washed down from the degraded hills, donates its life-supporting capacity to the lower slopes or alluvions over which it is deposited; but, unfortunately, the productive capacity of such rich bottom lands suffers outright ruin by overwash of gravel or sand as soon as the poor sub-soil comes into being by the vicious process of soil erosion. The streams flowing from run-down catchments silt over spawning beds and expose the fish to the hot rays of the sun, ultimately resulting in severe and increasing floods which cause suffering, and disease and death to the people as well as dislocation to the country's most vital links of communication. Moreover, droughts become more frequent and the underground water level goes down.

Wind erosion, taking the world over, has been less extensive, but not less catastrophic, than water erosion. Wherever, in the arid and semi-arid regions, man denudes the land of its protective cover, the soil loses its absorbing capacity and pulverizes under low moisture content. Wind whips up the dry soil bodily from the surface, darkening the

atmosphere with sand and dust which suffocate men and animals and do great damage to the neighbouring standing crops. The soil particles drift with the wind and at last settle down on fertile lands forming 'dunes.' The middle west of the United States, Canada, Russia, Australia, South Africa, and certain drier parts of India, namely the Punjab and Rajputana, all know its terrors.

Man has converted this world into a play-ground of soil erosion, which is taking place today in almost every country in varying proportions. Even Western Europe, which was till recently supposed to be immune from slow disintegration by this force, has been shown to be undergoing severe sheet and gully erosion, particularly in Germany and Czechoslovakia. Continuous, rather than intensive, utilization has greatly ruined the lands of India. Recent exploitation, due to the increasing population under British rule, has caused some of the worst erosions over wide tracts of our country. Sheet erosion has been going on for centuries and some of the spectacular erosions by gullies may be seen in various parts skirting the foothills of the Himalayas, for example, in the Punjab Siwaliks and Jalpaiguri Dooars. In India floods are nowadays more common and catastrophic than a few decades before, intensifying the periods of drought causing crop failures. At the present moment India, like other countries, is passing through a food crisis unprecedented in her history; and the nation, aching with the necessity of feeding its seething population, will be compelled to cultivate intensively every inch of available ground that was formerly considered inadvisable to be put under the plough. Such practice will so seriously accentuate erosion that the soil which may normally be washed away in a century will disappear within a couple of years, leading to flood like the Damodar disaster of 1918 or even still worse calamities. It is disappointing to note that despite the best aids of science to enhance crop yields, the average output per acre, the world over, is falling; and in the opinion of the Allied Food Conference held at Hot Springs, U. S. A., on May 18th, 1943—

> Soil erosion, unless checked, constitutes the greatest physical danger to the world's food production. India is drying up and may become a second Sahara unless the problem of erosion is efficiently dealt with.

After the last Great War, people shuddered at the pitiable condition of their superfluous prosperity standing on the frame-work of an unstable soil which erosion was reducing to the original barren rock quite unfit to be used for animal or plant habitat. In the United States the soil erosion problem has been given great publicity to make the nation conscious of the gravity of the situation threatening the entire country. A nation-wide programme of soil conservation has been inaugurated by the Department of Agriculture and other Federal and State organizations. The United States Soil Conservation Service conducts research to determine the soil and water losses which take place under different land-use and farming practices under the different climatic conditions in the continent. Flood control, prevention of silting up of reservoirs, rivers and harbours, and the construction of highways in relation to soil conservation are also other aspects of the problem. Although the rest of the world is still lacking in the accumulation of scientific data, certain practical measures have been adopted to temporarily check the progressive extension of erosion. Successful reclamation work is being carried out in different parts of Africa affected by soil erosion. Canada has slowed up the onward march of erosion by proper erosion-control measures initiated and encouraged by the Government. The people of Australia are also fighting this erosion menace as a national problem,* and the donation of £25,000 to the University of Adelaide by the family of the late Mr. Frederick-Ramson served as an impulse to their campaign. In Japan the Government has stirred up the nation to apply anti-erosion projects in

the eroding regions to control floods and to ensure essential food production in the valley. Our neighbour China, being now deprived of the fertile soil in the north-west region through faulty land-utilization practice by her ancient people, has taken into consideration the urgency of employing erosion-control measures for feeding her teeming millions.

In India very little work has been done in this direction. Dr. Gorrie was the first to initiate soil-erosion measurement in the Punjab; and this was later followed in Sholapur (Bombay) and Bengal. The present writer determined both in the field and laboratory the soil and water losses in the bare condition for some of the erosion-affected regions of Bengal. In this connection the writer acknowledges his gratitude to his teacher Dr. A. T. Sen, M.Sc., Ph.D. (Lond.), Agricultural Research Chemist, Dacca University, who encouraged him to take up this subject for special study. It may not be out of place to mention here that Dr. Sen carried out erosion measurement on three types of soils commonly found in the Myngian district of Burma during his deputation as Agricultural Chemist to the Government of Burma during the period 1937-40, and his observation furnished the basis for further investigation by the present writer on Bengal soils. All the soils examined in the field by the writer are found to be fairly erosive. As much as 21 to 75% of the annual precipitation may escape as run-off; and as much as 20-171 tons of soil may be eroded annually, carrying with it 102-3221 lbs. of nitrogen and 2.3-17.2 lbs. of P205 approximately. In the laboratory, gullies are found to form in some soils from 10% slope and in other soils from 15% slope onwards. Forest soils can absorb much more rain water than those under cultivation. Some interesting observations have also been made, e.g., the application of organic matter very greatly reduces the soil-loss and run-off, especially at low slopes, of the type of soils examined; while lime, contrary to the popular belief, accelerates both. The areas so far reclaimed in India pale into insignificance in comparison with the immense devastations caused in the country.

History is the best guide of man; and it is always open to him for seeking wisdom from the past. Soil erosion is like a contagious disease spreading destruction far and wide to countries of other nationalities, affecting the interests of different communities or industries in such an adverse way that the whole social structure at last threatens to collapse. The world is still rich in her soil resources to feed this and many other generations to follow if only man can adjust himself to living together with plants and animals and insects, rather than attempting the abortive task of moulding the environment to suit his immediate requirements. The prospect of the Industrial Era depends not only upon the development of agriculture but also on the conservation and preservation of the soil. Soil erosion is a century-old problem, the solution of which becomes harder with the lengthening of the period of destructiveness. The Allied Powers have promised durable peace with the cessation of the present world war; but that peace would not be worth enjoying unless erosion is checked and the cultural structure, now tottering on an unstable soil, is placed on a more secure footing. Much, as yet, remains to be seen as to how the post-war agricultural scheme is planned, especially in India which is one of the worst sufferers from erosion.

GIRISH CHANDRA GHOSE—POET AND DRAMATIST

By Kumud Bandhu Sen

Early Life and Education

About the middle of the nineteenth century there arose a galaxy of stars in the firmament of Bengal shining over every field of human activities diffusing around them a new light on the different aspects of life—in religion, politics, and literature. In the midst of this new era of transition and adjustment with foreign thoughts, Girish Chandra was born in February 1844 at Baghbazar in the northern quarters of the metropolis of India. He came of a respectable middle class *Kâyastha* family and was the eighth child of his parents. The house now numbered as 13 Bosepara Lane, is only a few minutes' walk from the bank of the Ganges—the most sacred and holy river for the Hindus. People of all ages and denominations throng there in all hours of the day to take their bath singing hymns and uttering sacred divine names. The family had an ancestral deity named *Shridhara* in the house, before whom all festivals were observed with due ceremony. The atmosphere in which Girish grew up, was full of *Paurânic* ideas made instinct with life by the staunch belief with which men clung to them. In his boyhood, every evening, he used to listen to his old widowed grand-aunt pouring out stories from the *Râmâyana*, the *Mahâbhârata* and the *Purânas*. One evening when he was listening to her stories of Shri Krishna (*Akrur-samvâd*), with wrapt attention, ending in tragic descriptions of Vrindavan, owing to the departure of Shri Krishna for Mathura, the boy with tears in his eyes asked her, 'Did Shri Krishna return from Mathura?' The old lady replied, 'No, he never came back to Vrindavan.' Girish at once left the place weeping bitterly and did not go to the old lady for stories for the next three days. It made such a deep impression on him that even in his old age he could not be induced to hear *Mâthura*—those *Vaishnava padas* which describe the condition of Râdhikâ after Krishna had gone to Mathura. Girish thus imbibed from his surrounding a sense of *rasa* and fed on it in listening to *kathakatâ*, *half âkrai*, *kavi*, *pânchâli* and witnessing *jâtrâ* performances. They deeply impressed him in his early days and their influence may be traced in his writings and songs as well as in his general outlook on life.

Girish lost his mother when he was very young and his father Nilkamal used to take special care of him.

One day Girish, in his boyhood, went to a neighbour's house where *half âkrai* songs were going to be sung. The place was fully crowded. Girish observed that suddenly there was an uproar, and he soon perceived that there was a great reception on foot for a bright-looking and smiling gentleman, then just entering the house. On inquiry, Girish came to learn that he was the poet of the age—Iswar Gupta. The boy then and there resolved to be a famous poet like him. With this aim in life, he read Bengali literature and got by heart the works of Kashiram Das, Krittibash, Bharat Chandra, and other great poets. It made him indifferent to his class lessons, though he was bright and intelligent as stated by one of his class-mates—the late Sir Gurudas Banerji in the Town Hall meeting, held to pay tribute to the loving memory of Girish Chandra after his demise. He failed to pass the Entrance Examination ; and the portals of the university were closed to him. He never tried it again and led a Bohemian life. He was married and his

father-in-law, looking at his wild habits, induced him to accept a job in Messrs. Atkinson Tilton & Co. in 1866; but he left it soon, taking an appointment in the firm of Messrs. Argenti Schilizzi & Co., where he served only for a year. In 1866 his eldest son Surendranath Ghose (the famous actor, popularly known as Dani Babu) was born while he was serving with Messrs. Atkinson & Co.

Though Girish, owing to his indifference, was not successful in his academic studies, yet his thirst for knowledge was strong enough. He had such a passion for books that nothing escaped him—science, philosophy, history, poetry, and other branches of knowledge—he devoured all that came in his way ; and this passion stuck to the very end. He thus acquired a sound knowledge in all these subjects, but, at the same time, his old religious belief was shaken, and he became a sceptic. It will not be out of place to mention here that his knowledge of science and his keen interest in scientific experiments induced him later to attend the Science Association, where deep intimacy and mutual regard soon grew up between him and Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar.

Foundation of Bengali Stage and Girish Chandra as an Actor

During spare time Girish used to go to a neighbouring club where an amateur *jâtrâ* party was formed. *Sharmishthâ* was to be staged, and he helped it in rehearsals, and composed songs for the occasion. In leisure hours, Girish used to compose songs and translate English verses into Bengali poems.

During this time, the new kind of dramatic activity was growing popular. The Belgachia Theatre, under the patronage of Paikpara Raj and the directions of Keshab Chandra Ganguly, Ramnarain, and Michael Madhusudan, attracted the attention of educated youths and scions of aristocratic families. In the heart of this metropolis there were four theatrical stages —one private theatrical society patronized by the Kumars of Sovabazar Rajbati; second, the Pathuriaghata Banga Nâtyâlaya under the guidance of Maharaja Sir Jatindra Mohan Tagore ; third, the Jorasanko Theatre under the direction of Jyotirindra Nath Tagore and his brothers ; and fourth, the Bowbazar Banga Nâtyâlaya under the guidance of Manmohan Bose and Chuni Lal Bose. The success as an actor of Keshab Ganguly who was an inhabitant of Baghbazar and who was praised by Sir Frederic Haliday for his skill in the histrionic art and whom Madhusudan used to call the Garrick of Bengal, might have inspired Girish Chandra with lofty ideals of dramatic art. Girish Chandra had by this time become friendly with Kaliprasannu Sinha, the immortal translator of the *Mahâbhârata*, equally an enthusiast for the development of the stage. The cumulative effect of the above influence and agitation led Girish Chandra to induce the *jâtrâ* party to convert itself into the Baghbazar Amateur Theatre.

In 1869, he first appeared as Nimchand in the play *Sadhabâr Ekâdashi* written by the dramatist Dinabandhu Mitra. He showed his inimitable histrionic genius in that role. In the *Bangadarshana*, which was then edited by Rabindranath, Sarada Charan Mitra who was one of the puisne judges of the Calcutta High Court and one of the presidents of the Bangiya Sâhitya Parishad, described it and paid high tribute to the wonderful histrionic skill of Girish as Nimchand. His recitations from Shakespeare and British poets were wonderful. Rasaraj Amritalal Bose wrote in his reminiscences with reference to this recitation, 'You have not heard his grand voice'.

His recitation of Bengali verses was equally wonderful. In the *Lilâvati*, Girish took the part of Lalit, and the author Dinabandhu addressed him thus : 'I could never imagine that my verses could be read so beautifully.' He further stated, 'There cannot be

any comparison between you and the Chinsura party. I will write to Bankim ; he has had the worse of it.' The Chinsura Theatre party was then staging *Lilâvati*, led by two literary magnates—one Bankim Chandra and the other Akshaya Chandra Sarkar.

Encouraged by popular applause and the praise of the educated and enlightened men of Calcutta, the Baghbazar Amateur Theatre party intended to start a public stage under the name of the National Theatre. Girish opposed the proposal. His reverence for the art was too deep. Foreigners, specially Europeans, generally have an inferior estimation of Indian art and culture. It would be ridiculous to call an institution 'National', when a few young men of Calcutta, without the backing of the rich and cultured society and having no funds at their disposal, ventured to call an institution 'national'—the very idea appeared to him to be morally dishonest. Moreover, Girish thought that the cultured people would not be present, as they would be reluctant to purchase tickets and sit down with the masses to witness the performances on the public stage, which were sure to suffer in comparison with the English stages of Calcutta in respect of sceneries, dresses, and other paraphernalia. But his party paid no heed to his advice. Girish who was then directing the rehearsal of *Niladarpana*, left the group. But this severance was only for two months. The first opening night was 7th December 1872, and the play was *Niladarpana*. Dinabandhu keenly felt the absence of Girish and noted it. The party then selected *Krishna-kumâri*, but none ventured to take the part of Bhim Sinha. At last they approached Girish Chandra who agreed on condition that his name would be mentioned as an amateur. Girish appeared on 22nd February 1873 on public stage in the role of Bhim Sinha. Michael Madhusudan was present to witness the performance of *Krishna-kumâri* at the National Theatre. He highly appreciated and admired the histrionic skill and talent of Girish Chandra. It was Madhusudan who, while writing the *Krishna-kumâri* drama encouraged Keshab Ganguly to start a National Theatre at Calcutta. He was so much enthusiastic over it that he wrote to Mr. Ganguly: 'If this tragedy be a success, it must ever remain as the foundation stone of our National Theatre.' He further added: 'It strikes me that if the drama is to be acted, you had better at once organize your company and begin operations with two acts already printed. Go on rehearsing at Jatindra's, and then we can settle whether we are to do in the Town Theatre or blaze out at old Belgachia.' Unfortunately after the play of the *Krishna-kumâri* the National Theatre was closed owing to internal dissension and mismanagement, in spite of the best efforts of Sisir Kumar and Girish Chandra to save it from that miserable situation. It was Madhusudan who, after the close of the National Theatre, induced young Sarat Chandra, a grandson of Satu Babu, one of the richest men of Calcutta, to start a public stage under the directions and guidance of a committee consisting of representatives of leading citizens and intelligentsia of Calcutta. Accordingly a committee was formed consisting of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Pandit Samasrami, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Umesh Chandra Dutt of Rambagan, and others. The name of the stage was the Bengal Theatre. It was again Madhusudan who proposed in that committee that the female parts should be played by actresses. Vidyasagar vehemently protested and opposed the idea, but Madhusudan carried the proposal by a majority of votes. Pandit Vidyasagar resigned his membership and severed all connection with the above committee.

Girish Chandra suffered a series of bereavements during this time, and lost his wife in 1874. He could not stand the shock and was attacked with monomania. He lost his job as the firm of

life. By *Paurânic* dramas and by dramatic representations of Buddha, Shankara, Chaitanya, Rupa-Sanatana, and other saints and sages of India he touched the soft chord of the nation; and in an inimitable way he played on them with wonderful skill and sweetness. He inspired men with lofty ideals and sublime thoughts, elevated the people to the height of beauty and joy, and taught them the service and worship of humanity through love and divine outlook. For this his close association with Shri Ramakrishna was not a little responsible. His religious scepticism vanished when he came in contact with Shri Ramakrishna as a result of which he was totally transformed in his ideas and thoughts, in his deeds and habits, and his outlook on man and Nature. He wanted to renounce the world, but the Master commanded him to continue the work for the good of the people. Girish obeyed it till his death. His sense of duty was so great that he would not miss going to the stage even in inclement weather. This strain, however, made him bed-ridden. He died on 8th February 1912 at the age of sixty-eight years.

His domestic, social, romantic, and other dramas—both comedies and tragedies—are still unrivalled. His *Prafulla* and *Hârânidhi*, *Balidân* and *Shâsti-ki-shânti*, *Bishâd* and *Kâlâpâhâr*, *Mâyâbasan* and *Bhrânti*, *Serajuddaula* and *Mirkassim*, *Shivaji* and *Satnâm*, and all other dramas are like bright gems.

His Bilvamangal is a wonderful drama which speaks of his high artistic genius and creative mind. It is an admitted fact that an essential basis of carefully conceived situations designed to arouse, stimulate, and startle by their strangeness, their peculiarity or unconventionality is the true requirement for a drama. Dramatic situations are quite different from those necessary for narrative fiction. All his characters are full of innumerable sweet, sublime, and characteristic diversity of their own.

His delineation of characters, both men and women, in the change of this world, his dialogues which are a special creation in modern dramatic literature of Bengal, and his dramatic arrangements on the stage and the composition of innumerable sweet, sublime, and thought-provoking songs, are charming and beautiful. In *Paurânic* dramas he excels so much that he will stand ever on a high pedestal of glory and immortality.

It will not be an exaggeration to state here that it is impossible to give within a short essay even a brief outline of his monumental works and dramatic career. The more we study his dramas, the more shall we appreciate his extraordinary creative genius as a great poet and dramatist.

He dedicated his life to the establishment of our national stage, creating a band of histrionic artists, and contributing some of the best dramas to Bengali literature with a message of India's eternal truth, spirituality, and love of humanity. This is his gift to the nation and the country for leading it to the path of future glory and immortality.

Have that all-effacing devotion to God which the moth has to the flame. In a single moment it burns itself to death, and shrinks not its body while burning.

Be as careful in constantly fixing thy devotion on God as the poor man is careful in preserving his guinea of which he is never unmindful and sees every moment that it is not lost.—*Saint Kabir*.

THE INDUS CIVILIZATION

By Prof. Sudhansu Bimal Mookerji, M.A.

Mohen-jo Daro and Harappa! How much they mean to the Indologist! Not very long ago the age of the *Rigveda* (c. 2500 B.C.) was supposed to be the starting point of Indian culture and civilization. Historical researches have, however, proved that they had a pre-Aryan beginning. The Dravidians, who had settled in India earlier than the Aryans, had a civilization more developed than the Aryan in more respects than one. The discovery of Mohen-jo Daro by the late lamented R. D. Banerji in 1922 revealed the existence of a flourishing civilization in the Indus valley in the chalcolithic era of human history. The chalcolithic civilizations all sprang in river valleys and Mohen-jo Daro was no exception. It stood on the Indus.

Mohen-jo Daro (lit. 'The Mound of the Dead') is in Larkana in Sind. What its name actually was will never be known. What its civic life was like will ever remain a sealed book. One thing, at any rate, is certain. It was highly civilized. The civic and social life of its inhabitants seem to have been fairly developed. The great people who built this civilization before the dawn of history in India, might take legitimate pride in their architecture, sculpture, and sanitary system which far excelled those of the contemporary Aryans.

Sir John Marshall's theory was that the Indus civilization was contemporaneous with those the remains of which are scattered all over the Nile and Tigris-Euphrates valleys and that all belonged to the same group. This opinion has since been discarded. From the antiquities unearthed at Mohen-jo Daro, Chanher Daro, Amri, and other places in Sind and at Harappa in the Punjab, it has been established that at the time of the Aryan incursion into India there existed in the Indus valley a highly developed and far-extending civilization superior to the contemporary Indo-Aryan as well as the Elamite, the Mesopotamian, the Babylonian, and the Egyptian civilizations.

Some of the *Rigvedic suktas* refer to an uncivilized *dâsa* people the Aryans met on their arrival in India. The antiquities unearthed at Mohen-jo Daro and other Indus centres, however, give the lie direct to this boastful assertion. Not to speak of the Vedic civilization, the pre-Aryan Indus civilization was in a higher stage of development than those of the Nile and Euphrates valleys.

The archaeologist's spade has brought to light many valuable and interesting antiquities buried underground. The Stone Age was not yet over. Man had just begun to use copper; and the weapons discovered at Mohen-jo Daro and other Indus centres were made of stone as well as copper. Of the weapons discovered, mention may be made of axe, spear, scimitar, arrow, bow, and sling. Arrow-heads were made of copper or bronze. Agriculture was highly developed. Mohen-jo Daro had a brisk export and import trade. Voyages or land-journeys to and from Babylon for purposes of trade seem to have been frequent. A large number of Mohen-jo Daro seals have been found in the ruins of the ancient Babylonian cities.

The potter's wheel had been invented. A piece of cotton cloth found at Mohen-jo Daro shows that weaving was not unknown. Cotton in ancient Greek and Babylonian is called 'Sindu' and 'Sindom', respectively. Would it be far from the truth to assume that the Indus (Sans. Sindhu) valley is the birthplace of cotton industry? Men and women were all very fond of ornaments, a large variety of which—necklace, bangle, armlet, anklet, ring, ear-ring—

has been found in the ruins of Mohen-jo Daro. The rich folk had their ornaments made of gold, silver, ivory, and other costly materials while the poor had to rest content with those of bone, stone, and copper. Of metals gold, silver, copper, tin, lead, and bronze were used. Iron was unknown. Articles of everyday use, such as, plate, water pot, cup, and tumbler, grinding stone and hand-mill were mostly made of earth or stone. Saw, razor, scythe, and hook were made of copper and needles and combs of bronze or ivory. Toys were of countless varieties and designs. More than 500 seals—some round and others quadrangular—have been found on the site and almost everyone of them has some figure engraved on it. There are, for example, figures of tigers, elephants, and oxen. The horse is conspicuous by its absence. The Aryans were the first to domesticate the horse in Central Asia about 2000 years before Christ. Of the domestic beasts and birds of the Mohen-jo Daro people mention may be made of the humped bull, the cow, the buffalo, the sheep, the camel, the bear, the goat, and the fowl. The script on the seals has baffled scholars up till now. When deciphered, it is sure to throw much new light on the contemporary civilization.

It may be inferred from the materials at our disposal that this Indus valley people worshipped the Mother Goddess as well as Shiva. One of the seals discovered here has on it a three-faced figure absorbed in meditation and surrounded by tiger, elephant, rhinoceros, buffalo, and deer. Besides, some other statues absorbed in meditation have also been discovered. The discovery of a large number of phallus and ring-like objects made of stone and earth points to the prevalence of phallus worship side by side with that of the female organ. Many are inclined to believe that snakes (i.e., *Nâgas*), beasts, such as bulls, crocodiles, tigers, etc., and trees also were worshipped. A Harappa seal represents a tree being born from the womb of a female figure. The worship of the Earth Goddess may have been practised by the people. Dead bodies seem to have been disposed of by complete burial, fractional burial, and post-cremation burial. Sir John Marshall thinks that at first dead bodies would be disposed of by cremation and post-cremation burial, which gave place to complete and fractional burial later on. These latter may have been due to foreign influence from the West.

The houses, streets, and drains of Mohen-jo Daro prove conclusively that their builders were consummate architects and town-planners. The broadest street of Mohen-jo Daro was 33 ft. wide and 6 furlongs long. The city was divided into a number of quarters each separated from others by wide streets. The quarters had each a number of buildings. Lanes running by the buildings connected the wider roads. Rooms on the ground floor facing the wider streets were used as shops. Bricks used were both burnt and sun-dried and buildings were sometimes two or three stories high. Some were 80 ft. in width with their walls 4 or 5 ft. in thickness. Each such house had its well, drain, bath-room, and courtyard.

The wonder of wonders unearthed so far is a big bath. It is so big and well built that considering the age of the structure we cannot imagine anything better. Surrounded by a 7/8 feet thick wall it is 180 ft. by 108 ft. In the centre is a courtyard wherein is to be found a $39' \times 23' \times 8'$ swimming pool. This bath had at least one upper story. On two sides of a lane a little to the north are two rows of baths meant probably for the priesthood.

Mohen-jo Daro had an excellent drainage system. Long drains were brick-built while the perpendicular ones for the outlet of used and dirty water from upper stories were of burnt earth. Latrines were brick-built and had arrangements for the removal of the night-soil.

The ruins at Chanher Daro, Amri, and Harappa have yielded antiquities—

much less though—similar to those of Mohen-jo Daro, and it is apparent that they all had a common culture. It is indeed very difficult to believe that so advanced a civilization as that of Mohen-jo Daro was confined within the narrow limits of a single city. Chanher Daro, it may be noted, was poorer than Mohen-jo Daro, and this has led some to think that it was an artisans' town. Metals were more in use here than stone.

How old is the Indus civilization? The excavation of the ruins at Mohen-jo Daro has revealed seven strata, one upon another. These have been assigned to three different periods—the late, the intermediate, and the early. According to Dr. Mackey the three uppermost strata belong to the late period, the next three to the intermediate period, and the lowest to the early period. He is of opinion that there are still earlier strata. Five seals similar to those of Mohen-jo Daro have been found in different places of Elam and Mesopotamia. At least two of these are anterior in time to King Sargon of Mesopotamia (c. twenty-eighth century B.C.). So they belong to the twenty-ninth or thirtieth century B.C., if not to a still earlier period. Two seals found at Ur and Kish, too, support the view that the Indus civilization belongs to the third millennium B.C. Sir John Marshall, who thinks that five centuries must have intervened between the founding of Mohen-jo Daro and its final destruction by the floods of the Indus, places the Indus civilization between c. 3250 and c. 2750 B.C.

Who built this civilization? The question is yet to be answered. Several theories have been advanced. It was once believed that the Indus civilization was but a phase of the Sumerian and was given the name of Indo-Sumerian civilization. Some again are of opinion that the Indus valley people were of Dravidian origin. There are some who think that the Dravidians and the Sumerians belong to the same racial stock and lived originally somewhere to the East of Mesopotamia or in the Indus valley. There are some again who identify the Indus valley people with the Vedic Aryan group. It may be of some interest to note the principal points of similarity and dissimilarity between the Vedic Aryan and Mohen-jo Daro civilizations. The Vedic Aryan was an agriculturist living in the village. He seems to have dwelt in huts made of bamboo and cane. The builders of Mohen-jo Daro, on the other hand, lived in buildings made of burnt brick. A study of the finds *in situ* reveals that wells were dug at short intervals for the supply of water to citizens, drains were built to let out impurities and impure water, and wide roads were constructed for pedestrian and vehicular traffic. But the Vedas give no such proof of a developed civic life. So far as the use of metals is concerned, there is much similarity between the two. Thus both used gold, silver, copper, and bronze, but neither knew the use of iron. The weapons of offence and defence of both were similar with this difference that the people of Mohen-jo Daro used stone and metal clubs which the Vedic Aryans do not seem to have used. The latter used helmets and armours none of which has been discovered at Mohen-jo Daro. The *Rigvedic* Aryans were meat-eaters. Whether they were fish-eaters as well is not definitely known. Fish, however, seems to have been one of the principal items of the daily food at Mohen-jo Daro. A large number of hooks found at Mohen-jo Daro lends strength to this view. In the Vedic age the horse was a familiar animal, the cow was assigned a place of honour, image worship seems to have been unknown, female deities were held to be inferior to male deities, the Mother Goddess and Shiva were not worshipped, offerings were made to the Fire-God, and phallus worship was held in contempt. At Mohen-jo Daro, on the other hand, the bull was more popular than the cow. The large number of images discovered at Mohen-jo Daro

indicate the prevalence of image worship. Shiva as well as the Mother Goddess were worshipped, but not, perhaps, the Fire-God.

Of the two civilizations, the Vedic is not only later but of an entirely different origin as well. Some scholars point out that there were two waves of Aryan migration into India—the Vedic Aryan and the Alpine Aryan. The latter, according to this view, came earlier, occupied the Indus valley, and built the Indus civilization. It is just possible that this civilization was not the creation of any one people, but of several.

Whoever may be the builders of this great civilization, India owes a deep debt of gratitude to them. Norman Brown truly says,

> Although we are ignorant of many phases of civilization, we recognize numerous cultural items which still persist in India, such as the 'Svastika' or the veneration of the 'pipal' tree, and we plausibly interpret other remains as indicating that some of the major phases of the Indus intellectual life were already in existence, such as of the use of 'Yoga' methods in religious meditation.

THE SPIRIT OF INDIAN CIVILIZATION

By Swami Vivekananda

(*Concluded*)

The Tests of Patriotism

They talk of patriotism. I believe in patriotism; and I also have my ideal of patriotism. Three things are necessary for great achievements. First, feel from the heart. What is in the intellect or reason? It goes a few steps and there it stops. But through the heart comes the inspiration. Love opens the most impossible gates; love is the gate to all the secrets of the universe. Feel, therefore, my would-be reformers, my would-be patriots! Do you feel? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and of sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving today, and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming consonant with your heart-beats? Has it made you almost mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that? That is the first step to become a patriot, the very first step. . . .

You may feel, then; but instead of spending your energies in frothy talk, have you found any way out, any practical solution, some help instead of condemnation, some sweet words to soothe their miseries, to bring them out of this living death? Yet that is not all. Have you got the will to surmount mountain-high obstructions? If the whole world stands against you, sword in hand, would you still dare to do what you think is right? If your wives and children are against you, if all your money goes, your name dies, your wealth vanishes, would you still stick to it? Would you still pursue it and go on steadily towards your own goal? As the great king Bhartrihari says, 'Let the sages blame or let them praise; let the Goddess of Fortune come or let Her go wherever She likes; he indeed is the steady man who does not move one inch from the way of truth.' Have you

got that steadfastness? If you have these three things, each one of you will work miracles. You need not write in the newspapers, you need not go about lecturing, your very face will shine. (C. W., III. 225-226).

FUNDAMENTAL EVIL

First of all, is our physical weakness. That physical weakness is the cause at least of one-third of our miseries. We are lazy; we cannot work; we cannot combine; we do not love each other; we are intensely selfish; not three of us can come together without hating each other, without being jealous of each other. That is the state in which we are—hopelessly disorganized mobs, immensely selfish, fighting each other for centuries as to whether a certain mark is to be put on our forehead this way or that way; writing volumes and volumes upon such momentous questions as to whether the look of a man spoils my food or not! This we have been doing for the last few centuries. We cannot expect anything high from a race whose whole brain energy has been occupied in such wonderfully beautiful problems and researches! And are we not ashamed of ourselves? Aye, sometimes we are, but though we think these things frivolous, we cannot give them up. We think many things and never do them; parrot-like thinking has become a habit with us, and never doing. What is the cause of that? Physical weakness. This sort of weak brain is not able to do anything; we must strengthen it. First of all, our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends; that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to Heaven through football than through the study of the Gita. These are bold words, but I have to say them, for I love you. I know where the shoe pinches. I have gained a little experience. **You will understand the Gita better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the *Âtman*, when your body stands upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men. Thus we have to apply these to our needs. (C. W., III. 241).**

Centuries and centuries, a thousand years, of crushing tyranny of castes, and kings, and foreigners, and your own people, have taken out all your strength, my brethren! Your backbone is broken, you are like down-trodden worms! Who will give you strength? Let me tell you, strength, strength, is what we want. And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads, and believe—'I am the Soul.' 'Me the sword cannot cut; no weapons pierce; me the fire cannot burn; me the air cannot dry; I am the omnipotent, I am the omniscient.' So repeat these blessed saving words. Do not say we are weak; we can do anything and everything. What can we not do? Everything can be done by us; we all have the same glorious soul, let us believe in it. Have faith, as Nachiketâ. At the time of his father's sacrifice, faith came unto Nachiketâ; aye, I wish that faith would come to each of you; and everyone of you would stand up a giant, a world-mover, with a gigantic intellect, an infinite God in every respect; that is what I want you to become. This is the strength that you get from the Upanishads, this is the faith that you get from there. (C.W., III. 244).

We want that energy, that love of independence, that spirit of self-reliance, that immovable fortitude, that dexterity in action, that bond of unity of purpose, that thirst for improvement. Checking a little the constant looking back to the past, we want that expansive vision infinitely projected forward; and we want—that intense spirit of activity (*rajas*) which will flow through our every vein, from head to foot.

* * *

Do you not see, taking up this plea of *sattva*, the country has been slowly and slowly drowned in the ocean of

tamas, or dark ignorance? Where the most dull want to hide their stupidity by covering it with a false desire for the Highest Knowledge, which is beyond all activities, either physical or mental; where one, born and bred in life-long laziness, wants to throw the veil of renunciation over his own unfitness for work; where the most diabolical try to make their cruelty appear under the cloak of austerity, as a part of religion; where no one has an eye upon his own incapacity, but everyone is ready to lay the whole blame on others; where knowledge consists only in getting some books by heart, genius consists in chewing the cud of others' thoughts, and the highest glory consists in taking the name of ancestors; do we require any other proof to show that that country is being day by day drowned in utter *tamas*?

Therefore, *sattva*, or absolute purity, is now far away from us. Those amongst us who are not yet fit, but who hope to be fit, to reach to that absolutely pure *Paramahamsa* state—for them, the acquirement of *rajas*, or intense activity, is what is most beneficial now. Unless a man passes through *rajas*, can he ever attain to that perfect *sâttvika* state? (C.W., IV. 337).

Wanted Workers

A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising-up—the gospel of equality. (C.W., V. 12).

I heard in Japan that it was the belief of the girls of that country that their dolls would be animated if they were loved with the heart. The Japanese girl never breaks her doll. O you of great fortune! I too believe that India will awaken again if any one could love with the whole heart the people of the country—bereft of the grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, their discretion totally lost, downtrodden, ever-starved, quarrelsome, and envious. Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost, for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance. I have experienced even in my insignificant life, that good motives, sincerity, and infinite love can conquer the world. One single soul possessed of these virtues can destroy the dark designs of millions of hypocrites and brutes. (C.W., V. 96).

India is Awakening

The longest night seems to be passing away, the sorest trouble seems to be coming to an end at last, the seeming corpse appears to be awakening, and a voice is coming to us—away back where history and even tradition fails to peep into the gloom of the past, coming down from there, reflected as it were, from peak to peak of the infinite Himalaya of knowledge, and of love, and of work. India, this motherland of ours—a voice is coming unto us, gentle, firm, and yet unmistakable in its utterances, and is gaining volume as days pass by, and behold, the sleeper is awakening! Like a breeze from the Himalayas, it is bringing life into the almost dead bones and muscles, the lethargy is passing away, and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see, that she is awakening, this motherland of ours, from her deep long sleep. None can resist her any more; never is she going to sleep any more; no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant is rising to her feet. (C. W., III. 146).

Once more the wheel is turning up, once more vibrations have been set in motion from India, which are destined at no distant day to reach the farthest limits of the earth. One voice has

spoken, whose echoes are rolling on and gathering strength every day, a voice even mightier than those which have preceded it; for it is the summation of them all. Once more the voice that spoke to the sages on the banks of the Sarasvati, the voice whose echoes reverberated from peak to peak of the 'Father of Mountains,' and descended upon the plains through Krishna, Buddha, and Chaitanya, in all-carrying floods, has spoken. Once more the doors have opened. Enter ye into the realms of light, the gates have been opened wide once more. (C. W., IV. 275).

SAMAVEDA—A QUERY

By Bimalacharan Dev

At two places in the *Mahâbhârata*, the *Sâmaveda* is highly extolled. One is at *Bhishma Parvan* (ch. 34, Shl. 22= *Shrimadbhagavadgita*, X. 22), where we have Shri Krishna saying, वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि. The other is at *Anushasana Parvan* (ch. 14, Shl. 328), where we have Upamanyu praising Mahâdeva, सामवेदश्च वेदानाम्. At both the places the purport is to indicate the very best of a class.

In so far as the enumeration of the Vedas goes, we have it usually in the following order: *Rigveda*, *Yayurveda*, *Sâmaveda*, *Atharvaveda*. The first question which naturally occurs to one is, How is it that the third in enumeration is the most excellent of the three? There is, no doubt, a rule that, what comes later in the order of enumeration is better than that which precedes it. But we are not aware of any such rule in connection with the Vedas.

Then the next question is, Why is it excellent? What is the reason why it is deemed superior to the other two Vedas?

I have been able to look into nine commentaries on the *Shrimadbhagavadgita*, which are collected in Damodar Mukherji's edition. Of the nine, six (including Shankaracharya) are silent on the point; only three, viz, Baladeva, Madhusudana, and Nilakantha say something (to be precise, the same thing) about it. Baladeva say, गीतमाधुर्येणोत्कर्षात् सामवेदोऽहम्. Madhusudan says, गानमाधुर्यातिरमणीयः सामवेदोऽहमस्मि. Nilakantha says, सामवेदगानेन रमणीयत्वात्. They all say practically the same thing, *Sâmaveda* is most excellent because it is very sweet to the ear.

Is this really convincing? Does this 'explanation' really satisfy? One somehow feels that the real reason for this excellence must be something other and higher than mere sweetness.

Then we come upon a startler. We are told that the sound of this most excellent *Sâmaveda* is अशुचि. We have in the *Mârkandeya Purâna* (102. 119):

विसृष्टौ ऋङ्मयो ब्रह्मा स्थितौ विष्णुर्यजुर्मयः।
रुद्रः साममयोऽन्ते च तस्मात् तस्याऽशुचिर्ध्वनिः॥

At creation of the Universe, the presiding deity, Brahmâ, is *Rigveda*; at preservation of the Universe, the presiding deity, Vishnu, is *Yajurveda*; and at the final destruction of the Universe, the presiding deity, Rudra, is *Sâmaveda*. That is why *Sâmaveda* is अशुचि.

Then we have in the *Manusamhitâ* (IV. 124):

ऋग्वेदो देवदैवत्यः यजुर्वेदस्तु मानुषः।
सामवेदः स्मृतः पित्र्यस्तस्मात् तस्याऽशुचिर्ध्वनिः॥

The *Rigveda* is sacred to the gods, the *Yajurveda* is sacred to men, and the *Sâmaveda* is sacred to the *Pitris* (manes). That is why it (*Sâmaveda*) is अशुचि.

The immediately preceding *Shloka* gives the effect of this on the other two Vedas, saying, सामध्वनावृग्यजुषी नाऽधीयीत कदाचन.

Smritichandrikâ (Ed. Gharpure), *Âhnika Prakarana* (p. 59, 1.27), says, सामशब्दे ऋग्यजुषोरनध्यायः। नाऽन्यस्य तदाह मनुः, and refers to Manu IV. 128.

So we have the intriguing position—*Sâmaveda*, which is more excellent than the other two Vedas, is also अशुचि, so much so that the other two Vedas cannot be studied, if the sound of the *Sâmaveda* is heard. It is indeed startling to be told that a Veda can be अशुचि, even to a limited extent, in comparison with any of the other Vedas. So far as the *Mârkandeya Purâna* is concerned, we do not find there any limited 'bar' (as in Manu, IP. 123) regarding any of the other Vedas.

One thing is noticeable that while both the *Mârkandeya Purâna* and *Manusamhitâ* agree in saying that the *Sâmaveda* is अशुचि, the reasons assigned by them are different. One naturally feels impelled to ask, Which of the 'reasons' is the real reason? Or is neither the real reason? Can it be that the real reason having been lost in course of time (the practice having survived), what we find in recensions of the *Mârkandeya Purâna* and the *Manusamhitâ* now available, represent merely attempts to explain the practice of not reading the *Rigveda* and the *Yajurveda*, if the sound of the *Sâmaveda* is heard? We do not know what the older recensions of these books contained. It is fairly well known how 'recensions' have played havoc with the texts of our sacred books.

It would be interesting to know:

(1) What is the real reason of the *Sâmaveda* being the most excellent of the Vedas? (2) Is the *Sâmaveda* really unclean, even to a limited extent or should we understand the word अशुचि in any other sense? (3) Why this bar to reading the other two Vedas on the sound of *Sâmaveda* being heard?

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

The April issue of the *Prabuddha Bharata* brings into focus some glorious periods of Indian history. Mohen-jo Daro, Ujjain, and Suvarnadvipa, though temporally and spatially separated, belong really to the same spiritual domain; and Vikramaditya's towering personality just tops the crest of a Himalayan wave that rose gradually from the Indian cultural ocean to subside again through centuries to unperturbable stolidity. Mr. Sudhansu Bimal Mookerji's *The Indus Civilization* gives a glimpse of the early beginnings of Hindu culture . . . . Swami Dhyanatmananda's *Vikramaditya* has topical interest in view of the two thousandth anniversary of the Vikrama Era which the country celebrated last month. . . . The Editorial gives a graphic account of Greater India in her palmy days. . . . To Mr. Kumud Bandhu Sen, who is well known as the Bengalee biographer of Girish Chandra Ghose, the great poet and dramatist of Bengal and a disciple of Shri Ramakrishna, we are indebted for his timely article which is of topical interest inasmuch as Bengal celebrated the poet's first birth-day centenary last month. . . . But lest the readers should complain that the *Prabuddha Bharata* is too engrossed with the past Prof. A. K. Dutt of the Dacca University makes, for our realists, a very timely and illuminating contribution on *Soil Erosion*. . . . And for modern idealists there is a fresh presentation of the *Implications of the Doctrine of Mâyâ* by Mr. P. Nagaraja Rao of the Hindu University. . . . Lastly Mr. Bimalacharan Dev presents us with a riddle about the *Sâmaveda*. We wish very much that he had given the solution as well. But he wants others to throw more light on the problem and help him in straightening it out.

Civilization and Spiritual Life

Do civilization and human progress go hand in hand? The life of the modern man who is proud of his culture and refinement, centres round selfish interests. Accumulation of wealth and enjoyment of sense pleasures seem to be the signs of civilization, and the very object for which it is worth while acquiring these is neglected.

> Judged from that standpoint, does it appear that human culture, by which is generally meant today the ways of living and thinking in Europe and America, is advancing?

Thus asks Mr. J. M. Ganguli, writing in the *Aryan Path* of February, 1944. He maintains that prior to the advent of modern Western culture 'there was more sense of the dissatisfying incompleteness of life than there seems to be in the men of education and culture today.'

Civilization is a word for which there is no definite connotation. In its modern sense, it is popularly associated with the possession of an individualistic outlook on life, characterized by a bold and reckless pursuit of material prosperity, and the maintaining of a cynical attitude towards the fundamental values of the life of spirit. The civilized peoples of the West wage the most ruthless wars for the sake of material and physical possessions. It is these that are of absorbing interest to the moderner, while religion and spirituality are anathema to him.

> His mind distracted by the surrounding environment and his thoughts preoccupied with the interests of his fleshly self, he dismisses spiritual curiosity, if it ever awakens, by calling that idle thinking and an unprofitable pursuit, or even by denying the possibility of the existence of anything spiritual or immaterial.

True civilization, as Mr. H. H. Fyfe points out in the *Hibbert Journal*, is 'being civil—friendly, helpful, tolerant, doing to others as we would they should do to us.' Progress of civilization lies in the subordination of the selfish to the unselfish, of the material to the spiritual. Religion and spirituality are essential to the growth of the high moral ideal which true culture is intended to foster. Culture is the harmonious development of the subtler faculties of the mind, and the regulation of the processes of human thought. To cling tenaciously to one's own and to hate passionately another's does not signify advancement of culture. As the writer rightly says

> how miserably is found to fail the modern Western culture which is spreading over other parts of the world, displacing many better native ideals and institutions.

This failure is undoubtedly due to dearth of men endowed with renunciation and non-attachment. Present-day civilization has led humanity out of peace and contentment into competition, greed, and war. While undue emphasis is laid on the mere instrumental value of life, the more important experiences of intrinsic value are ignored as superstitious. But superstitions are not confined to the realm of religion alone, and scientific and political superstitions of today are proving no less impediments to human progress. The civilization of India has been able to stand the test of time through the ages, in spite of repeated onslaughts of alien influences, as it is based on a sound spiritual foundation. The neglect of the spiritual values of life is the cause of unrighteousness among 'civilized peoples,' and, as the writer truly concludes, this is 'more an indication of intellectual dullness and cultural retrogression than of progress.'

Scheduled Castes

Addressing the All-India Scheduled Castes Conference, the Hon. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar blamed Hinduism for the disabilities from which the scheduled castes were suffering, and as a remedy advised the members of his community to discard their religion. We take the following as it appeared in the *Hindu* of Madras:

> Dr. Ambedkar asked the people to ponder over the causes of their sufferings extending over a long period of two thousand years. The Hindu Dharma, he asserted, was the

main cause. Of all religions in the world, it was Hinduism that recognized caste distinctions and untouchability. This was the cover, the cloak, for all the injustices perpetrated on the scheduled castes by caste Hindus . . . . He, therefore, reiterated his conviction that they must discard Hinduism, and refuse to submit to indignities any longer . . . .

The learned Doctor did not tell his followers what new religious faith they have to embrace after abjuring the religion of their ancestors. From the trend of the resolutions passed at the Conference, it is clear that the issues involved are not social or economic, but political. Scheduled castes, as distinguished from Hindus or Muhammedans, were unheard of a couple of centuries ago in India, and yet we are told that they suffered indignities at the hands of the 'Hindus' for the last two thousand years. That change of religion does not guarantee social or economic betterment is evident from the deplorable condition of members of the scheduled castes, especially in the South, large sections of whom have embraced Christianity. Even if certain individuals or groups unjustly oppressed their poorer brethren in the name of religion, it is unwise to level ignorant criticism against Hinduism.

There is nothing so wicked about the caste system as some persons seem to think, though caste distinctions have, in certain cases, given rise to caste prejudices leading to social injustice. For the matter of that, no system or organization of a social, economic, or political nature has been able to eliminate completely the exploitation of one class by another in some form or other. Hinduism never justifies untouchability which has certainly to go; and caste, mainly a socio-economic institution, was but a process by which Hinduism civilized and assimilated the different racial groups that were taken in.

Of all religions Hinduism has truly upheld the dignity of the individual by asserting the divinity of man, irrespective of caste, creed, or colour. But social disabilities do exist, and, in recent years, resurgent Hindu thought has roused large sections of the community to actively take up the cause of the lower castes in all earnestness. Though some leaders of minority communities, anxious to maintain their political hold on the masses, create unreal differences and repudiate the religion and culture of their forefathers, it is encouraging to find that the rank and file are not inclined to be misled. The Conference itself passed 'no resolution discarding or intending to discard Hinduism. And elsewhere, the Working Committee of the All-India Depressed Classes League met and passed a resolution viewing with grave concern the growing activities of non-Hindu missionaries among the people of the Depressed Classes in various provinces, and expressing their apprehension that this would lead to the conversion of the people of those areas to Christianity. Where mutual distrust and antagonism have already been created by sedulous hands, the way to redress grievances does not lie in taking hasty and rash action which may 'kill the man along with the mosquito'. Dr. Ambedkar has very rightly advised his followers to 'shake off their inferiority complex,' 'rely on their own strength,' and 'refuse to submit to indignities'. But is it necessary to 'discard Hinduism' in order to be able to do these?

Never quarrel about religion. All quarrels and disputations concerning religion simply show that spirituality is not present. Religious quarrels are always over the husks. When purity, when spirituality goes leaving the soul dry, quarrels begin, and not before.

—Swami Vivekananda

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE SOUL OF INDIA. By Moti Lal Das. *Published by Mrs. Prabhavati Das, Shiva Sahitya Kutir, Jalpaiguri, Bengal. Pp. 167. Price Rs. 2.*

Mr. Das is a prolific writer in Bengali and has already about a dozen volumes in that language to his credit. The book under review, which is his maiden work in English, is a collection of twelve articles on the rich legacy of India as also a short poem entitled *Mother India.* Five of the articles were read at culture centres in London, Berlin, Paris, Belfast, and Hamburg, and three of them appeared in two high-brow monthlies in India. The essays are of general interest and were mainly written for the foreign reader. The articles on Kalidasa, Rabindranath, Chaitanya, Chandidasa, and Buddha are fairly interesting.

In the first article, after which the book is named, the author points out quite poetically the salient traits of the Indian nation and traces the fundamental continuity and unity of Indian culture through the ages. He rightly observes that the steadfast faith in the transcendental source of life and humanity has saved India from utter extinction. 'The civilization of Greece, Rome, Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon are gone;' he continues, 'dead is Greece and dead are her gods. The power of Rome is a chapter of History. Egypt lives in her mummies and pyramids. Assyria and Babylon are forgotten. But India still lives' It is the ancient faith in the Spirit that has made India survive through centuries and overcome death. The author is right in cherishing the great hope that though to-day India is shorn of her past glory and 'her lamp of life burns dim in her lone cottage', yet if she sticks to her ancient faith, she shall rise up in near future and win her rightful place in the federation of nations. The author remarks that Indian civilization, which is 'grand in its outlines, unique in its perfections of details, and immortal in its virility,' is destined to bring deliverance to the weary world, and India's gospel of spirituality of life will heal modern life of its intense intellectualism in which it is badly steeped.

The paper on Chaitanya's magnetic personality and God-intoxication will be extremely entertaining to the readers who are devotional-minded. The personality of Chaitanya was so attractive that none could turn his eyes away from his divine beauty, and his presence was so elevating and purifying that all around him used to be inspired with thoughts of God. The last article dealing with Rabindranath clearly brings out the excellences of his poetry and the universality of his message.

BENGALI

BENOY SARKARER VAITHAKE. By Shri Haridas Mukherjee. *Published by Chakravurtty, Chatterjee & Co., Ltd., 15, College Square, Calcutta. Pp. 453. Price Rs. 3.*

Mr. Mukherjee used to frequent Sarkar's parlour for a period in 1942. He had interesting conversations there. The topics, starting with Swami Abhedananda ended with Shyamaprasad. Prof. Sarkar is an encyclopaedia of knowledge. When he speaks, the listeners are overwhelmed with a plethora of information—too much to be remembered. He starts from home, inspiration takes him abroad, and after a long peregrination through America, London, Germany, France, and Japan he again comes back to his subject and concludes by giving out his own way of looking at things. A detailed review of these talks is hardly necessary; for the matters are not very new and have been already applauded or criticized. It is, however, always true that a man is best known from his informal talks, and this Vaithaka is no exception in revealing Sarkarism unreservedly. Mr. Mukherjee took notes of these conversations for himself. But at the instance of some of his friends, who accidentally read some of these notes and thought that a publication will help the young students in their pursuit of knowledge, he has published this big volume for a wider public.

BHABISHYATER BÂNGÂLI. By S. Wazed Ali, B.A. (Cantab), Bar-at-Law. *Published by Prabartak Publishing House, 61, Bowbazar Street, Calcutta. Pp. 112. Price 1-8.*

We read the whole book in one breath and found it immensely interesting from page to page. This is a book of the hour; its title literally means 'Bengalee of the future'. The small volume is divided into seven chapters, some of which are 'Bengalee of the future', 'The nature of the future', 'Religion of love', and 'National awakening'.

Some serious problems that confront Bengal and, in fact, the whole of Hindustan, are thoughtfully discussed in these chapters by an enlightened Bengali Muslim, though it should better have been written in English for the sake of the non-Bengalees as well.

The first chapter concerns the Bengalees, both Hindus and Muslims. The first thought in it, that strikes the reader at the very outset, is that, on account of the naturally existing defensible frontiers, India is geographically one indivisible country where only one nation is destined to grow. This itself is a home-thrust to those who indulge in the absurd day-dreams of Balkanizing India. The author rightly favours the view of dividing the land into several linguistic provinces as suggested by the Congress, converting each such province into an almost independent State and then forming finally a Federation of all the States. Each province, having its distinct language, literature, history, and culture, is, according to the author, quite capable of being turned into a State that should have the Dominion status for internal affairs only. A central Government over the union of States will look after the defence and foreign relations of the whole country. Bengal, the author believes, has almost all the materials for growing into such a State, and the Bengal of the future will develop into an ideal State and show the way to other Indian provinces.

The second chapter first gives a history of the nation idea. In ancient times there was clanship by which the empires of Cyrus and Chengis Khan were formed. Clanship then grew into city State, and on that model the empires of Rome, Athens, and Carthage were built, and then the city State made way, in the medieval age, for religious States, as made by emperor Charlemagne and Khalif Harun-al Rashid, and lastly the religious State turned into the modern nation, as prevalent in the whole world of today. The author, after detailing nine distinguishing features of the nation idea, observes that India can stand united only on the nation idea, setting aside all religious and other differences. As, the author says, nations in other lands have been built on this idea, India cannot do otherwise.

The fourth chapter analyses the root causes of Hindu-Moslem disunity in Bengal, and suggests proper and practicable solutions for the establishment of unity between these two sister communities. Undesirable influences of the religious leaders with communalistic bent of mind, popularity of communalistic literature, want of institutions for closer union of the two communities, the false hope of some people to get back the communal State of the middle age, and the potent influence of non-Bengalis on the present-day life of Bengal, are some of the main causes that have created a yawning gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims. The first and foremost thing that can lay the foundation of this unity, the author rightly says, is that Hindus and Muslims should realize in their heart of hearts the supreme fact that they will have to live together for ever, and that they are Bengalees first, and then Hindus or Muslims. Truely did the members of the Turkish goodwill mission declare, while in India, that they are Turks first and Muslims or Christians afterwards. Chiang Kai-Shek, though by religion a Methodist Christian, is the national leader of China. Nazif Azidi and Beterus Bostani—both Christians, are the founders of Arab nationalism. The bright sincerity of the author prompts him to declare that those who fan the flames of communalism should be prosecuted in the court, and a country-wide agitation should be launched to stop communalistic propaganda of all kind.

The next chapter traces in a short compass the development of English literature and then that of Bengali literature. He humbly begs the literary men of today to create such a literature as may enrich the minds of both Hindus and Muslims, send the past differences into oblivion, and hold constantly before the public a glorious future of the country, absolutely free from present unpleasantness. As H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, and Aldous Huxley are dreaming of a better future for mankind, so our writers should do in right earnest. Collective dreams will in the fulness of time materialize into tangible realities.

The last but one chapter is very interesting and instructive. It contains a brief outline of Sufism—the religion of love—with apt quotations from the Persian Sufi poets Jalaluddin, Jami, Saadi, Omer Khayyam, Hafiz, etc. Sufism, the fairest flower of Islam, eloquently speaks of the glories of universal love and does not distinguish a Muslim from a non-Muslim. The Sufi poet Hafiz says, 'O Hafiz, if you desire union with Truth, then love one and all irrespective of creed. Say Allah, Allah, with a Muslim and Râm, Râm, with a Hindu.' The author relates the personal experience of meeting such a Sufi in a mosque in the village of Pandu, in the district of Hoogly, in Bengal. He reached there in the evening and alighted from his motor car. Simultaneously the call of Azan as well as the sound of conches and bells were heard in the mosque. This surprised the author who

was told by the old Khadem of the mosque that He who is the Khuda of the Muslims is the Bhagavân of the Hindus. May this spirit overwhelm the Hindus and Muslims alike!

In the concluding chapter, the author suggests that as we live in the modern age, we should dismiss our medieval ideas and ideals as dead and gone, think of living thoughts, and cultivate a new outlook. This is no doubt the need of our age. Moreover, the present-day awakening, the author opines, should be consolidated on nationalism and not on religion. The author then feelingly unbosoms his eager expectation of a superman, the man of destiny, like Ashoka, Akbar, George Washington, or Kamal who will make his epochal appearance in India when circumstances will be propitious, and he will crown India with independence. The chapter is finished with a description of such a superman.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION DISTRESS RELIEF WORK IN BENGAL

Report from June, 1943

The Ramakrishna Mission began the Distress Relief work in Bengal last June, and gradually extending its area covered, through its 75 relief centres, a maximum of 1,169 villages, spread over 19 districts, in December. Reports of this work have been published from time to time in this journal. We are now presenting a consolidated report up to January last, when the first phase of our work ended.

Till the end of January we distributed 37,002 mds. or rice, 2,955 mds. of other food-grains, 28,964 cloths, saris and chaddars, 8,169 blankets and 4,371 banians. The number of recipients reached its peak in December, when it came up to 1,28,972, the figures for September, October, and November being 5,201, 27,227 and 51,113 respectively. In January the number came down to 93,430. Besides free doles, Rs. 35,645-6-0 was distributed as pecuniary help. Relief in the form of supplying rice and other food-grains at concession rates was given to 4,172 persons on an average per month, the total amount of rice thus sold being 2,752 mds. and other food-grains 634 mds.

Milk canteens were run in 13 centres, from where a maximum of 3,070 children and invalids were daily served with milk and diet. Seven free kitchens were also organized by the Mission, which daily fed a maximum of 8,240 persons.

Along with this, medical aid was given through most of our centres. Homoeopathic medicines were given free to general patients and quinine to the malaria patients. We also got considerable help from our permanent dispensaries at about twenty places.

The total receipts up to the 15th March were Rs. 8,75,451-2-11 and the total expenditure Rs. 7,01,132-7-4. Besides we received in kind about 40,000 mds. of rice and other food-grains and 54 bales of cloth and blankets during the period.

From February the second and restricted phase of our relief work has begun. Owing to various reasons, of which lack of funds is the principal one, we have had to curtail our activities to a great extent. At present the work is being conducted only through 50 centres. We are now concentrating mainly on medical relief and test relief, and giving free doles on a restricted scale only to the absolutely needy or the disabled. The total quantity of quinine distributed in the two months of January and February was about 15 lbs. 5 ozs.

But we feel that in a short time the Distress Relief work will again have to be expanded. It is only through the concerted efforts of us all that a recurrence of the last year's tragedy can be averted. We, therefore, appeal to the generous public to help us in every possible way and thus save our countrymen from destitution, misery and death.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

Swami Madhavananda,
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission.
20-3-44.

GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT AT THE RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA CENTRE OF NEW YORK

Just fifty years ago Swami Vivekananda, an unknown monk from India, electrified the great audience of the opening session of the Parliament of Religions, at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, with his message of universal brotherhood. It was as a direct result of his appearance at the Parliament, where he delivered a number of addresses on Hindu philosophy and religion, that the Vedanta movement was started in America. In celebration of the event, the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New

York held two special services on Sunday, 14 November, 1948.

At the Sunday morning service in the chapel, Swami Nikhilananda gave a sermon on *Fifty Years of Vedanta in America* before an audience that filled the auditorium. The chapel was tastefully decorated with beautiful flowers, which added to the festive atmosphere.

In the evening an even larger gathering had the privilege of hearing several brilliant speakers and, in addition, a fine programme of music by Bach, César Franck, and Handel. Two outstanding artists, Mrs. Helen Teschner Tas, violinist, and Dr. Paul Berl, pianist, contributed largely to the success of the celebration by their sensitive rendering of the works of great masters of Western music.

Mr. Joseph Cambell, President of the Centre, gave the opening address and introduced the speakers. In the course of his remarks he stressed the importance of the coming together of the Occident and the Orient. To the message of the culture bearers of the West, he declared, the Orient has only begun to reply. Westerners have hardly begun to realize the majesty, the serene sublimity, of the Asiatic soul.

The President then called on Swami Yatiswarananda, the first guest speaker of the evening. The Swami had come all the way from his new centre in Philadelphia especially for the occasion. In a moving discourse he told of his first contact with the message of Shri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda shortly after the latter's death. He also explained why the people of America are so receptive to the ideas of Vedanta, pointing out the similarity of its teachings to some of the fundamental ideas of the American Declaration of Independence. Swami Vivekananda, he said, put before us the great ideal which we may call the Declaration of Man's Spiritual Freedom. He appealed to the Americans because he was a man who not only spoke of unity, but felt unity and knew how to express it through loving service.

The second guest speaker of the evening was Dr. Irwin Edman, the well-known professor of philosophy in Columbia University. There are two reasons, he said, for Westerners to be grateful that the Vedanta movement has taken root in America. First, this movement has been significant in furthering that exchange of culture and imaginative understanding between India and the Western world which is helping to make the world one. And second, in this practical and at the moment distraught country, full of necessary hurried urgencies in temporal aims, here is a movement that quietly and pertinaciously says that the ills of time will never be cured unless time itself is seen in the perspective of eternity. The Vedanta movement, he continued, is a noble instance of a religious tradition that can appeal to people without technical training and experience because of the sense of common fellowship in the divine quality it teaches, and at the same time can appeal, and perhaps even more strongly, to philosophers.

After another musical selection by Mrs. Tas and Dr. Berl, the Vice-president of the Centre, Mr. Denver Lindley, was called on. The Columbian Exposition of 1893, he declared, was actually an occasion for celebrating the material progress of America. At the Parliament of Religions, as in a museum, various religions were exhibited some even under glass. Then, startlingly, into this museum came something that did not belong to a museum at all. It was Swami Vivekananda. The reason for the tremendous effect of this captivating and volcanic person was that to him religion was a passion ; it was completely necessary to the life of man. The West's great need has been for men who have verified in their own persons the meaning of existence. That is the service that Swami Vivekananda and those who have followed after him have rendered to us.

In conclusion, Swami Nikhilananda spoke on *Swami Vivekananda : the Spirit of India*, presenting in detail some of the important aspects of the great Swami's message.

After the closing selection of music, Indian rice-pudding was served to the entire congregation. Those who were fortunate enough to be present felt that this was one of the most noteworthy celebrations in the history of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, thoroughly befitting the Golden Jubilee of the inauguration of the Vedanta movement in America.

REPORTS PRINTED

The following branches of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission have published their reports for the periods noted against each:

Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal	1942
Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore District	1942-43
Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home and Shivananda Vidyalaya, Batticaloa, Ceylon	1942-48
Shri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mymensing	1987-48
Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras	1948

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX | *MAY, 1944* | No. 5



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

THE SUPREME SURRENDER

By Swami Turiyananda

Man is only a machine, it is the Lord who is the mechanic. He indeed is fortunate by whom He gets His work done. Everyone has got to work in this world, none can escape this. But work binds him who acts for selfish ends, instead of freeing him from bondage. Skilful persons, on the other hand, cut the bondage of work by working for His sake. Not I, but it is He who is the agent—this feeling cuts the knot. And this alone is the great truth. The egoistic feeling of agency is mere delusion, for 'I' can hardly be discovered by searching. If one reasons, 'Who am I', the real 'I' gets merged in Him. The identification of the self with body, mind, and intellect is delusion born of ignorance. Do they ever endure till the end? Not one of them survives discrimination. Everything goes, there remains only one Existence—from which everything emanates, in which everything rests, and to which everything returns in the end. That Existence is Brahman, Existence-Intelligence-Bliss Absolute, the witness of ego-consciousness; and again It creates, preserves, and destroys, although It is omnipresent and non-attached. Resting on Him this world-machine is being driven by His power. The sportive Lord watches and enjoys His play. He to whom He reveals this, realizes this. Others do not realize this even after knowing it, and are being deluded by regarding themselves as different from Him. This is His *mâyâ*. If one works after taking refuge in Him, this *mâyâ* vanishes. The agent feels that he is not the agent, but only an instrument. This is said to be being non-active even while acting; this is the realization of non-agency; this is liberation in life. It is for the enjoyment of the bliss of liberation in life that the Self embodies Itself; otherwise the embodiment of the Self, which is ever free, in pursuance of a desire for worldly life, can in no way be maintained. The supreme goal of human life is to realize the disembodied state even while in the body. If man

can realize this, he attains the aim of his life. My earnest prayer to the Lord is that we may, even in this life, realize that joy of liberation in life. May this life be our last embodied existence, that is to say, may we not be born again for gaining selfish ends. May this conviction, faith, and realization take firm root even in this life that we live for His sake alone and not for anything else. May the Lord be gracious unto us.

HINDUISM ABROAD (II)

By the Editor

In our last month's article we made a factual survey of the outward spread of Hindu culture. Research has not been able either to discover all the relevant facts or to connect properly those that have been brought to light. With the help of anthropology, archæology, epigraphy, literature, contemporary histories, and records, etc., historians have presented us with only the bare outlines of those glorious days when Hinduism and Hindu culture were respected all over the world and they inspired the thought and civilization of the countries around. Naturally enough, Hinduism left its most indelible marks on the East; but its influence on the West was no less in evidence in those days.

After a factual study of Hindu expansion, our next endeavour is to discover the causes of its contraction, a task beset with innumerable difficulties. But from the point of view of the present-day Hindu society, such a study is immensely beneficial and ought to be undertaken, even though the results may be meagre and often disheartening. For this purpose we may have to resort to *a posteriori* arguments, draw presumptive conclusions from the known facts of Indian history, or propound theories that may not stand the scrutiny of future researches. We proceed, therefore, with trepidation, and our only excuse is that as Hindus we cannot long ignore the pressing question, Why did Hinduism come to grief? May be, Hindu society still hugs to its bosom those very weaknesses which proved its undoing; may be, another epoch of more glorious days is waiting just at our threshold—waiting for us to accept it with the necessary faith, adequate strength, and proper reorientation after throwing overboard much of the unnecessary ballast that hampered progress in the past. This is our excuse.

The Far East was thoroughly saturated with Hindu ideas in all the social, political, and religious fields. Though local needs often played a part in giving a new colouring to these ideas, the dominating factor for at least five centuries was the Indianism of the Indians in the main land. Thus the *Manusamhitâ*, along with some other Hindu books on law and politics guided life in Indo-China and Malaysia. Sanskrit was the language of the cultured. Art and architecture drew their inspiration from India, and artists were often directly imported from there. Changing modes of thought in the main land found their repercussions in the colonies, and political vicissitudes in India were followed by kaleidoscopic changes there.

Thus, though it cannot be ascertained beyond doubt as to whether Hinduism or Buddhism reached the Far East earlier, it is easy to detect the synchronism between Hindu renaissance in India and Brâhminic predominance in the colonies during the Gupta period. The rise of

Vajrayana or Tantrayana under the Palas of Bengal was followed by a similar transformation in Malaysia. The *rapprochement* between Hinduism and Buddhism that India brought about, was carried to a closer consummation in Java and Cambodia. The revival of Vaishnavism in South India under Ramanujacharya found its counterpart in the predominance of the same faith in Cambodia, where it resulted in the construction of the monumental temple of Angkor Vat. And lastly, the growth of Muhammedanism in India meant also the Islamization of Malaysia. Not only this, this change over to the new faith was actually carried out by Muhammedans from India. The parallelism being so close and the source of changes during various ages being so easily discernible, India cannot deny its past responsibility for what took place in this zone. From this point of view, then, we shall consider some of the factors that worked for the downfall of the Far East, or, at least, failed to sustain it during its worst periods.

II

The political theory of Malaysia and Indo-China, followed closely that of India of those days. We must remember that in the early years of the Christian era, India had made short work of her republics, and monarchy had taken firm roots. Imperialism, too, was strongly in evidence. In the Far East it was autocratic, monarchical rule everywhere. The king had of course his ministers. But these were recruited often from his near relatives. The common people had no voice in affairs of State. In Majapahit in Java came into existence a council of the near relatives of the king, which tried to curb the growing power of the Prime Minister. But there was no vestige of democracy. To make matters worse the Far East carried Manu's theory of the divine origin of the king to its logical conclusion. Manu said,

> **A king is not to be lightly thought of, for he is no other than a great deity in that form (VII.8).**

The *Chiraprabhâ Tikâ* explains this thus:

> The king, though a child, should not be lightly treated as a human being, for he is verily a great deity incarnated as the king.

The imperial Guptas were called '*paramadaivatas*', '*lokadhâmadevas*', etc.

This gave rise to the 'Deva-râja' (king-god) cult of Kambuja. 'The "king-god", represented in Kambuja by a *linga*, did not appertain to any particular king, but embodied the divine fiery essence incarnate in every king and essential to the welfare of the kingdom.' A similar divinity attached to the royal throne of Java, and in both the countries the king received posthumous names indicative of their identification with Godhead. Statues raised in honour of such canonized kings received the worship of the multitude.

The common man was seldom in the forefront. The poets, who show great mastery in their art, devoted their energy to writing panegyrics; and facts hardly warrant the conclusion that literature ever took the common man into consideration. The best portion of the city of Angkor Thom was reserved for the king and the aristocracy, the common people being settled on lands outside the moat. Even in the king's absence the common people were debarred from entering a royal hut built within the temple precincts. Slavery was rampant, and even religious establishments received gifts of slaves of both sexes. Thirty-five Khmer inscriptions found on a petty monument contain a long list of slaves dedicated to temples, four thousand of whose names have been deciphered.

The picture was not very different in Malaysia. Java, for instance, had a good number of slaves; and laws, based on Manu, had to be framed for the regulation of their sale, the status of their children, etc.

III

The most regrettable part of it, as already noted, was that religious institutions not only backed up such inequity, but, with the help of royalty and aristocracy, actually exploited the common people. They had their own slaves. Some royal edicts, discovered in Cambodia, speak even of female slaves attending on heads of shrines and professors of religious academies. It is also imaginable that these institutions demanded forced labour as well as heavy contributions from neighbouring areas donated to them. It is no wonder, therefore, that some inscriptions of Suryavarman's time (c. 1002 A.D.) refer to the desecration of shrines by rebels and their restoration by the high priests of the palace.

The exclusiveness of the Brahmins prevented the spread of Hinduism, and caste distinctions stood in the way of social harmony and consolidation. In Burma, the native population was not allowed to enter the Hindu temples. The Indians lived as distinct colonies.

Brahminical element in Burma seems to have made its mark at least as early as the sixth century A.D., and continued to have its share of influence on the people up to at least the fourteenth century. But it should distinctly be understood that this element was more or less confined to the Indian section of the population, and we have as yet no evidence in hand to show that Brahminism could ever replace Buddhism which was the religion of the State as well as of the people in general. (*Brahminical Gods in Burma* by Nihar Ranjan Roy, p. 83).

It was not simply a question of non-conversion—a non-admission of backward peoples into the high spiritual fold of the Hindus. It was really social exclusiveness, amounting to social stigma, that prevented the Hindus from winning the hearts of the common people to the cause of the new religion. Those social institutions that prevent Hindu consolidation in India were grafted bodily on the colonies. The matter is highly controversial. Any hint at the defectiveness of present-day social customs will be met with loud opposition from every quarter. Contemporary customs will be defended on grounds of spirituality, sociology, politics, and what not. But the question of values, justice, and even judiciousness apart, it is too glaring a fact to ignore, that the Hindus of old failed to mix as freely with the peoples of the colonies as some colonizing nations do nowadays. In so far as social consolidation was concerned, the Hindus failed to achieve anything like the Muhammedan or Christian colonists or even the early Hinayana Buddhists.

The Chinese sources inform us that the Hindus, and particularly the Brahmins, refused food from others. Besides priesthood was based on heredity rather than on birth, and many kings of the Far East are credited, like Vallala Sen of Bengal, with having put the caste system on a firmer basis, though apart from the Brahmins and the Kshatriya nobility we hear little of the Vaishyas and the Shudras. For the spread of Hinduism, the Brahmins seem to have depended on royal initiative. It seems to have been a state-managed thing, so much so that any change in the royal mood was speedily reflected on the masses.

The result of all this was that the Hindu religious establishments—temples, shrines, and academies—failed to win the hearts of the masses. Royal support sustained Hinduism so long as royalty itself was safe. But when family disputes arose, vices became rampant, and faiths changed, royalty disintegrated, and with this Hinduism collapsed like a house of cards.

IV

To understand the other factors that led to the decline of Hinduism, we should refresh our minds a little about the early advent of Hinduism in the Far East. It would seem that Hinduism was ushered there in the first instance by merchants, who were followed,

perhaps, by Kshatriya adventurers, who established political hegemony. This expansion of Hinduism, we must remember, went on despite the Hindu law books which condemned sea voyages and in spite of the ignorance of Hindu India about the world outside. The Hindu law books prescribed excommunication for those who dared to cross the sea. Hindu colonization was, accordingly, tolerated rather than encouraged. And Hindu India kept little information of the flourishing colonies. The Purânas record queer ideas about the lands beyond India. There are very few references to such Hindu settlements as Kambuja, Java, Sumatra, and Malaya. We are told that when an embassy was sent to India by the king of Funan, the Indian King exclaimed, 'What, are there really such people in the Far East?' To realize the full significance of this remark, it has to be noted that diplomatic relation between India and her colonies was never put on a sound, organized basis. It was more often an one-sided endeavour. Thus, though we hear of colonial kings coming to India on pilgrimage, or establishing temples and monasteries there, we do not come across any incident reciprocating such action. We need not remind the readers that we are here speaking of Hindu India, and are not concerned with Buddhist India. For Buddhist India had to her credit a better record so far as religious *camaraderie* was concerned. Ashoka, for instance, is said to have sent missionaries to the Far East. And even after him, such outstanding personalities as Atisha visited Sumatra. Many other Buddhist monks went to live in Malaysia or stayed there for a time while on their way to China. But both with Hindu India and Buddhist India the political relation of the colonies was always very tenuous, even if it ever existed. Compared with this, the Chinese were a more matter-of-fact people, and tried to maintain their imperial sway over the Hindu colonies, sometimes at the cost of Indian interests.

V

This unorganizedness of Hindu India was not a little responsible for the collapse of the colonies. True, Hindu philosophy, art, architecture, laws, and manners made a tremendous appeal in the colonies. But when the mother country failed to maintain a constant flow of inspiration and counteract the machinations of others, Hinduism could not keep high its head for long. And when these rival cultures made a mass appeal, Hinduism was absolutely nonplussed, depending as it did on the higher strata of society. Thus Hinayana Buddhism drove away Hinduism from Burma and Indo-China, and Muhammedanism drove it out from Malay and Indonesia.

It must be said, however, to the credit of Hinduism, that it worked for the uplift of the native animists in more ways than one, and even today the stamp of Hindu culture can be discerned on the Islamized Javanese or the Buddhist Siamese. But the regret is that unlike in India, Hinduism, as a professed faith, made a total retreat from those lands. Surely, there was something more at work than mere proselytization by other communities. And in our search for that something we must be ready to face very unwelcome facts at times. This unorganizedness is one of those skeletons in the cupboard, which we must take note of. True, Islam and Buddhism of old had nothing to show in the form of organization comparable to modern Christianity. But even then they easily surpassed Hinduism. Both these faiths stood fanatically for conversion. And given this blind urge, organization of some sort is bound to crop up. Thus, though the urge for trade and adventure grouped together the Hindu colonists, the cultural urge was not equally strong. In the general outlook, it was bound to play a secondary part. In the mother country the matter was otherwise. Hinduism here was a living faith, crying to be recognized as the prime fact of

social life. It, therefore, fought every inch of the ground before it yielded to others. In the colonies, Hinduism was as yet skin-deep. And when the other faiths came with their mass appeal and even the royal houses bent before them, whole countries changed faith almost overnight.

VI

The collapse of Hinduism resulted not a little from its failure to arrive at a proper understanding with other religions. The Indian colonies were but replicas of Paurânic India, whose highest achievement in religious toleration was a kind of syncretism which delighted in combining the images of various deities, and grafting conflicting religious theories on one another. Thus Buddha was acclaimed as an *Avatâra* of Vishnu, though the Buddhists themselves seldom believed in such *Avatâra*-hood. Hari and Hara were combined as a single deity; and, then, there was the image of Trimurti. In philosophy, the Hindu thinkers found no difficulty in reconciling Sankhya with Yoga, Yoga with Bhakti, Bhakti with Karma, and Karma with Jnâna. This syncretism worked wonderfully for a time both in India and her colonies. In the colonies they had their Shiva-Buddha, Brahmâ-Vishnu-Buddha-Shiva, etc., in addition to Hari-Harà and Trimurti. The Hindu kings actively encouraged Mahayana Buddhism, built Buddhist temples and monasteries to which they made grants and appointed priests. During coronation they called in both Hindu and Buddhist priests, and the chief State priest repeated Buddhist formulae as well as Hindu *mantras*. So they lived in peace.

But the matter took a nasty turn as soon as a rival faith sternly refused such compromise. Hinayanism, for instance, could not be pacified through this mechanism, nor could Islam give up its enmity. It pains one deeply to note that Hinduism of those days had not arrived at a harmony of faiths, which believes all religions to be effective in their respective spheres, and yet doggedly sticks to its own tenets as second to none. Instead of taking its stand on this higher idealism and this lasting spiritual truth, Hinduism either entered into open conflict or tried its old syncretism, but failed, since, unlike as in India, it lacked strength in the colonies.

Besides, there were psychological factors that contributed to the downfall of the Far East. As already noted, the Hinduism introduced there was of the Paurânic type, which gave birth to rites and rituals, social stratification and architectural achievement. It delighted in emotional expression rather than in self-collected penetration. One sees much of the traces of the high state of civilization attained by the colonies in the field of art, sculpture, and literature. But one hears little of intellectual contribution to the thought of the world. The little metaphysical speculation that the colonies had, was borrowed from India. It stopped with imitation and never aspired to new achievements. Intellectual freshness being clogged in this way, and ritualism being over-emphasized, Hinduism could not make any firm stand either against Mahayanism or Muhammedanism, which laid little stress on images and rites.

In the declining days, again, Tântricism of a degraded type, seems to have been favoured by the elite of both Hinduism and Mahayanism. It is recorded that King Kritanagara (thirteenth century) of Java lost his empire and his life when in the height of his power, because following the *tântric* custom he was too much addicted to wine. There are records also of other potentates who were given to the *tântric* mode of worship with the *panchamakâras*. Adityavarman of Sumatra, for instance, performed mystic rites in the cremation ground. While we do not for a moment impugn any mode of

worship as such, and we do admit that certain modes of worship may be suited to the temperament of certain worthy persons in their private individual capacity, we have to remember that such worship may easily be used as a cloak for nefarious activity by unworthy persons; and when men in high public position indulge in them, the chances of such misuse are immensely great.

These, then, are some of the factors that strike as possible reasons for the decline of the Far East. We may not be wholly right. But we as Hindus can no longer shut our eyes to the fact of our downfall in those colonies. And if this is not an acceptable explanation of that decline, it is time that we set out in right earnest to make a more thorough examination of the relevant facts.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: THE SPIRIT OF INDIA

By Swami Nikhilananda

Swami Vivekananda's appearance as a representative of Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago in 1893, is a significant event in the spiritual history of modern times. Through the new world the Swami came in contact with the whole of the West.

After a lapse of many centuries India again sent abroad a missionary of her faith and spirit. The message was immediately welcomed by the receptive, truth-seeking, alert, youthful, and kindly American people. From time out of mind it has been the mission of India to send her spiritual ambassadors to the outside world. The direct result has been the moulding of the spiritual and cultural life of Tibet, China, Korea, Japan, Burma, Ceylon, Siam, and the other countries of the Far East. Indirectly the influence of the Hindu culture has been felt throughout the Middle and the Near East. It has also left its impress on the thought of Greece, the religion of Christ, and the civilization of medieval Europe. Never should we forget that, five hundred years before the advent of Christ, Buddha exhorted his disciples: 'Go ye out into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.' Spirituality alone has been the national ideal of India, and India has zealously preserved her God-given treasure, from the dim past of antiquity to modern times, in spite of the many vicissitudes of her national existence. The day she forgets her national ideal she will be numbered with the extinct nations of the world.

Swami Vivekananda was the authentic representative of the spirit of India. He had sat at the feet of the great Ramakrishna and had his spiritual consciousness awakened by that God-man who represented India's culture of the past three thousand years. And Ramakrishna trained Swami Vivekananda in such a way that he might inspire India for three thousand years to come. The unlettered Ramakrishna was fully acquainted by inner experience with the essence of Truth, and had become, as it were, the lineal descendant of Krishna, Buddha, and Christ. He saw God face to face. His whole being was infused with the vastness of the Spirit. Through his flesh, made transparent by spiritual disciplines, shone the light of God. He was a living witness of godliness. On account of his intimate experience of the essence of many faiths he occupied a unique position, from which he could guide the pilgrims of various paths wending their way to the shrine of Truth. Full of love for all, he never allowed a word of criticism or condemnation to

escape his lips. He saw God in all, even in those whom the world called sinners; the multitude of beings appeared to him as the one Divine Spirit, who put on diverse masks in order to enrich God's sportive pleasure in the relative world. At peace with himself, Shri Ramakrishna was at peace with the world.

This wonderful Master quickened Swami Vivekananda's spiritual life. The Swami lived several lives, full and rich, in one. His spiritual experiences covered the entire gamut of visions, culminating in the all-annihilating experience of the One, the horizonless perspective in which merge and disappear all the ideals of the relative world. At the peak of his experience he found himself to be free of all the barriers that divide the Infinite Spirit from the finite soul. He realized the essence of India's faith. One life alone informs all lives; one existence is the basis of all names and forms. Each soul is an image of God, nay, the Godhead Itself, and the whole universe is the manifestation of the Divine Spirit. The universe has come from Bliss, it is sustained by Bliss, and in the end it merges in Bliss. Through all their different paths men follow the way of God alone. Art, science, and religion are but three manifestations of the one Reality.

At the Parliament of Religions Swami Vivekananda stood at the confluence of two mighty streams of thought and dominated them both. Behind him lay the great river of the Hindu spiritual culture, in the shallows of which innumerable men and women had bathed and refreshed themselves down the centuries, and into the depths of which great souls like Krishna and Buddha, Shankara and Chaitanya, had plunged and lost themselves. Under its shimmering surface the Hindu culture cherished peace and blessedness, beauty and truth, mellowed by time and enriched by the experience of great souls.

Before Swami Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religions flowed another stream of thought, which apparently was quite alien to the heritage of his own motherland. It represented the spirit of science, reason, inquiry, new enlightenment, and new life. It, too, had its depths. This youthful spirit of the Western World, strangely enough, found a special attraction in the youthful representative of the ancient Hindu culture; for Swami Vivekananda himself was barely thirty years old at the time. The Swami regarded his audience with real charity, sympathy, and understanding. He realized their problems and also the restlessness of their spirits. Only a few years back, he himself had passed through the same struggle of the soul. In his college days he had studied the agnostic philosophers and scientists of the nineteenth century and shared their scepticism. The tumult that had raged in his soul calmed down only when he sat in the presence of his Master. How can there be any confusion when one has the actual vision? How can one doubt faith if it is based on experience? Science, founded upon reason, does not really conflict with religion founded upon faith; for both ultimately refer to experience for the final judgement.

This meeting between the East and the West was in response to a cosmic demand. Religion and science, faith and reason, spirit and matter, the value of this world and the truth of the other world, were drifting away from each other. The refusal of both to realize their essential interdependence had created a chaos in people's minds. The two World Wars of our generation represent a phase of the conflict between science and religion. Swami Vivekananda echoed the ancient Indian thought when he proclaimed that science and religion are not antagonistic. Even they are not incommensurable. They are only two phases of the same Reality. Many centuries ago a Hindu prophet declared in the Vedas: 'By science one overcomes suffering, pain, and death, and by super-science one attains freedom and immortality.' Religion has

no doubt given man ideals, but science has given him the tools to apply them in life. The idea of the brotherhood of men, the oneness of existence, and the divinity of the soul—all based upon spiritual experience—cannot bring any solace or comfort to life without the discoveries of science and technology. Again, science, without the restraining hand of religion, becomes an evil force that ultimately frustrates its own ideal of bringing peace and happiness to mankind. The subjugation of passion, greed, and lust, the control of body, mind, and ego, and other moral disciplines, which alone distinguish a man from a brute, cannot be achieved by science; they belong entirely to the domain of religion. In creating a satisfying, healthy worldly culture, science must be imbued with religious spirit and religion must accept the scientific method.

The effect of the Swami's message on his American audience was great. For the first time many Americans came to realize that India was not just a part of the British colonial empire but had a rich history of its own, more ancient than the many empires of the past. The Indian people, notwithstanding their material degradation, possessed a spiritual vitality. A nation that could produce a Vivekananda must possess an unimpaired virility. Equally remarkable was the repercussion of the message upon India. For the first time in several centuries the Hindu nation became conscious of its own greatness and aware of its own mission in the world. In this respect Swami Vivekananda may be considered as a gift of America to India.

The thing about Swami Vivekananda that most impressed the vast audience in Chicago, besides his personality and eloquence, was the catholicity and universality of his message. He preached an all-inclusive religion. 'If one religion is true,' he declared, 'then all others must be true.' This bold statement can be understood only when we remember that religion is only a path and not the Truth. There are many paths, all leading to the one Goal, so designed by a wise Providence that everyone may find a religion suited to his nature and temperament. Therefore man does not proceed from error to truth, but from truth to truth. The Swami was not satisfied with the idea of mere toleration; he wanted us to cultivate the positive spirit of acceptance and reverence so that we might unite ourselves with every religion, praying in the mosque of the Muhammedans, worshipping before the fire of the Zoroastrians, and kneeling before the cross of the Christians. We should gather all these different flowers, bind them with the cord of love, and make them into a wonderful bouquet of worship.

Truth is not the monopoly of any creed or sect. An experience is true in so far as it is universal. Our notions of Truth may be many, but Truth Itself is One. Truth dissolves friction and removes contradiction. By realizing Truth one knows and understands all and remains at peace with everyone. Therefore the universal religion, the cherished ideal of every human heart, cannot be identified with an organized religion, which cannot dissociate itself from names, forms, or rituals. The Swami said at the Parliament:

> The universal religion must be one which will have no location in place or time, which will be infinite like the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and of Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahminic or Buddhistic, Christian or Muhammedan, but the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms, and find a place for, every human being, from the lowest grovelling savage, not far removed from the brute to the highest man, towering by the virtue of head and heart almost above humanity. It will be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will recognize diversity in every man and woman, and whose whole scope, whose whole force, will be centred in aiding humanity to realize its own true divine nature.

This ideal of a universal religion obviously cannot be identified with any

historic religion; nor can it be an eclectic faith formulated by intelligent minds. Religion is not a product of reason or intelligence; it is based on the superconscious experience of man. The universal religion of Swami Vivekananda's dream exists even now, as forming the true essence of all religions—Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Islam, or Hinduism. We can realize it by going beyond the names and forms, rituals and other non-essentials, of the religion that each of us professes.

Swami Vivekananda emphasized in his message that religion is an experience, the experience of the eternal relationship between the eternal soul of man and the eternal God. A mere belief in a dogma or creed is no indication of the genuine religious spirit. As we know God, we become God. Man worships God only by transforming himself into God. Sin is an error or a mistake. It is inevitable in man's journey through the relative world to the goal of his final emancipation. But sin cannot affect the soul, much less destroy it. Every experience is vital in the onward march of the soul. From experience it gains knowledge, from knowledge detachment, and from detachment liberation. The meaning of liberation is to become one with God, or as the Christian Gospel puts it, to be perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect.

Swami Vivekananda's message threw light on a knotty problem which always puzzles the seeker of Truth. Is work compatible with worship? Can one practise God-consciousness while discharging the duties of the world? The Swami himself, in his early youth, had faced this problem. Following the traditional ideal of the Hindu religion, he had once asked Shri Ramakrishna to grant that he might remain absorbed in the thought of God, with his eyes closed for days together, coming down to the sense plane only once in a long while to take nourishment for his body. In reply the Master had scolded him: 'Why are you so anxious to see God with your eyes closed? Can't you see Him with your eyes open? Can't you see Him in the countless men and women needing your love and service? To serve man is to serve God.' Thus Shri Ramakrishna broke down all the barriers between worldly activity and religious meditation, between the temporal ideal and spiritual values. God alone exists: the One and the many are the two modes of His manifestation. A devotee communes with Him through both work and worship. Therefore the laboratory and the farm-yard are as fit places for communion with God as the temple or the cloister. From the standpoint of the Lord there is neither acceptance nor rejection; everything is infused with the Divine Spirit. Personal salvation is not incompatible with the life of dedication; self-abnegation, consecration to the welfare of all, and liberation are synonymous terms. Bondage and liberation are conditions of mind. A man who is a slave of his ego and desires, is bound; but if he is free in mind, he is really free. A man who always keeps God-consciousness in his pocket, may engage in work or meditate in silence, but he is always communing with God. In the Ramakrishna Mission, founded by Swami Vivekananda, every monastic member takes the twin vows of attaining his own liberation and dedicating his life to the service of the world.

Fifty years ago Swami Vivekananda came to America as the spiritual ambassador of India. The interest he created, in American minds, about the spiritual life has not died down. On the contrary, it is increasing. When one takes into consideration the length of time needed by Buddhism and Christianity to attract the attention of the outside world, a period of fifty years seems very short. A dozen centres have been started, at the request of Americans, in the principal cities of the United States, through which the universal and strength-giving ideals of

Hinduism are preached to eager students. The birth and development of the Vedanta movement are some of the tangible results of the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago. We do not make converts to Hinduism; our aim is to kindle in the hearts of men and women the flame of the Spirit, and to keep it burning. The rest we leave to God.

That through the help of science the physical world is becoming smaller every day has become a trite saying. But what is not yet quite apparent is the cultural and spiritual interdependence of humanity. The East needs the West today to help her in the organization of her practical life. We want you to send us doctors, engineers, agriculturists, and scientists to educate us in the truths revealed to you by God through the physical sciences. The West also needs the East to help her to discover the depths of her soul. You may learn with profit from the teachers of India about God, the soul, and immortality. Deprived of this mutual help, East and West have both failed to solve their respective problems. In the East we often worship a ghost or a phantom in the name of the Spirit, and in the West people often worship a corpse in the name of the body. The East may have discovered great jewels of spirituality, but she has hidden them in heaps of rubbish and filth. In the West you have built, through the labour of centuries, a beautiful jewel-box; but the jewels are not yet in it.

The present era of material activity seems to be marked by a lack of spiritual vitality. Idealistic thinkers everywhere are feeling exhausted; they seem to be overcome by a feeling of frustration and futility. Perhaps we are not passing *through* a crisis, but going *into* a crisis. Perhaps there lies ahead of us a period when creature-comforts alone will absorb man's time and energy. Art, science, religion, and education may not have, in years to come, any spiritual value. Perhaps they will be exploited to multiply man's worldly pleasures. There will be dark days for humanity indeed.

But the torch of true culture must be guarded. A few vigilant souls have always preserved the light and handed it down to worthy successors.. Such souls exist in all societies and nations. In times of despair and crisis they derive spiritual vitality from their contact with other cultures. The fusion of cultures has always marked the birth of new eras in the civilization of the world. In the reorientation of Judaism we find that Abraham came from Mesopotamia, and Joseph and Moses from Egypt. Later on Judaism was influenced by Hellenism. Asia Minor and Egypt helped the development of Greek thought. The creative genius of medieval Europe came from Palestine. The birth of modern Europe was marked by the recovery of ancient Greece and Rome.

During this critical period of humanity—which is, perhaps, now going through the travail of a new birth—we may look for the profoundest inspiration from sources outside us, from the achievements of men under different skies. The Orientals realize this and have been sending, every year, thousands of their young men and women to be imbued with the true spirit of the West. The culture of the East, their religions and ethics, may give the Occident some help in fighting the obstacles it is up against. The builders of modern Europe, looking across the Middle Ages, envisioned only the Biblical past and the old Greco-Roman world; so the great universities founded by them teach only the classics associated with these. But now the whole world has become our cultural base. The training in the classics cannot stop with Isaiah and Paul, Socrates and Cicero. That would be an academic error, a failure of perspective. There lies before the West the vast field of Indian culture, which through Buddhism helped in the development of the humanistic civilization of China. H. G. Rawlinson has

remarked that as time goes on it will be increasingly realized that a knowledge of the history and culture of India is essential to the foundation of a proper understanding of the origin and growth of Western civilization. The intellectual debt of Europe to Sanskrit literature, already great, may well become greater in the course of the years.

Swami Vivekananda is the personification of the spirit of India, of the faith and ideal that India stands for. A Hindu loves India not because he happens to have been born on her soil; he loves India because from the very beginning of the recorded history of the world, down through the many changes of her national life, India has preserved great spiritual ideals, realized in the illumined consciousness of her great sons. God is Truth, God is Wisdom, God is Infinite. Peace is in God, goodness is in God, and unity of all beings is in God. By the Divine Spirit alone everything is pervaded. By realizing God, who is blessedness and joy, man goes beyond fear. In the knowledge of God lies deathlessness and life everlasting. He who is one, who is above all distinction of colour and creed, who fulfils the desires of all, who comprehends all things from their beginning to their end —may He unite us to one another with wisdom, which is the wisdom of goodness.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN LONDON

By C. S. B.

During the London season Swami Vivekananda has been teaching and lecturing to considerable numbers of people who have been attracted by his doctrine and philosophy. Most English people fancy that England has a practical monopoly of missionary enterprise, almost unbroken save for a small effort on the part of France. I, therefore, sought the Swami in his temporary home in South Belgravia to inquire what message India could possibly send to England, apart from the remonstrances she has too often had to make on the subject of home charges, judicial and executive functions combined in one person, the settlement of expenses connected with Sudanese and other expeditions.

'It is no new thing,' said the Swami composedly, 'that India should send forth missionaries. She used to do so under the Emperor Ashoka, in days when the Buddhist faith was younger, when she had something to teach surrounding nations.'

'Well, might one ask why she ever ceased doing so, and why she has now begun again?'

'She ceased because she grew selfish, forgot the principle that nations and individuals alike subsist and prosper by a system of give and take. Her mission to the world has always been the same. It is spiritual; the realm of introspective thought has been hers through all the ages; abstract science, metaphysics, logic, are her special domain. In reality my mission to England is an outcome of England's to India. It has been hers to conquer, to govern, to use her knowledge of physical science to her advantage and ours. In trying to sum up India's contribution to the world, I am reminded of a Sanskrit and an English idiom. When you say a man dies, your phrase is, "He gave up the ghost," whereas we say, "He gave up the body." Similarly, you more than imply that the body is the chief part of man by saying it possesses a soul. Whereas we say a man is a soul and possesses a body. These are but small ripples on the surface, yet they

show the current of your national thought. I should like to remind you how Schopenhauer predicted that the influence of Indian philosophy upon Europe would be as momentous when it became well known, as was the revival of Greek and Latin learning at the close of the Dark Ages. Oriental research is making great progress; a new world of ideas is opening to the seeker after truth.'

'And is India finally to conquer her conquerors?'

'Yes, in the world of ideas. England has the sword, the material world, as our Muhammedan conquerors had before her. Yet Akbar the Great became practically a Hindu; educated Muhammedans, the Sufis, are hardly to be distinguished from Hindus; they do not eat cows, and in other ways conform to our usage. Their thought has become permeated by ours.'

'So that is the fate you foresee for the lordly *sahib*? Just at this moment he seems to be a long way off it.'

'No, it is not so remote as you imply. In the world of religious ideas the Hindu and the Englishman have much in common, and there is proof of the same thing among other religious communities. Where the English ruler or civil servant has had any knowledge of India's literature, especially her philosophy, there exists the ground of a common sympathy, a territory constantly widening. It is not too much to say that only ignorance is the cause of that exclusive —sometimes even contemptuous—attitude assumed by some.'

'Yes, it is the measure of folly. Will you say why you went to America rather than to England on your mission?'

'That was a mere accident—a result of the World's Parliament of Religions being held in Chicago at the time of the World's Fair, instead of in London, as it ought to have been. The Raja of Mysore and some other friends sent me to America as the Hindu representative. I stayed there three years, with the exception of last summer and this summer, when I came to lecture in London. The Americans are a great people, with a great future before them. I admire them very much, and found many kind friends among them. They are less prejudiced than the English, more ready to weigh and examine a new idea, to value it in spite of newness. They are most hospitable too; far less time is lost in showing one's credentials, as it were. You travel in America, as I did, from city to city, always lecturing among friends. I saw Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Desmoines, Memphis, and numbers of other places.'

'And leaving disciples in each of them?'

'Yes, disciples, but not organizations. That is no part of my work. Of these there are enough, in all conscience. Organizations need men to manage them; they must seek power, money, influence. Often they struggle for domination, and even fight.'

'Could the gist of this mission of yours be summed up in a few words? Is it comparative religion you want to teach?'

'It is really the philosophy of religion, the kernel of all its outward forms. All forms of religion have an essential and a non-essential part. If we strip from them the latter, there remains the real basis of all religion, which all forms of religion possess in common. Unity is behind them all. We may call it God, Allah, Jahve, the Spirit, Love, it is the same unity that animates all life, from its lowest form to its noblest manifestation in man. It is on this unity we need to lay stress, whereas in the West, and indeed everywhere, it is on the non-essential that men are apt to lay stress. They will fight and kill each other for these forms, to make their fellows conform. Seeing that the essential is love of God and love of man, this is curious, to say the least.'

'I suppose a Hindu could never persecute.'

'He never yet has done so: he is the most tolerant of all the races of men.

Considering how profoundly religious he is, one might have thought that he would persecute those who believe in no God. The Jains regard such belief as sheer delusion; yet no Jain has ever been persecuted. In India the Muhammedans were the first who ever took the sword.'

'What progress does the doctrine of essential unity make in England? Here we have a thousand sects.'

'They must gradually disappear as liberty and knowledge increase. They are founded on the non-essential, which by the nature of things cannot survive. The sects have served their purpose, which was that of an exclusive brotherhood on lines comprehended by those within it. Gradually we reach the idea of universal brotherhood by flinging down the walls of partition which separate such aggregations of individuals. In England the work proceeds slowly, possibly because the time is not more than ripe for it; but all the same, it makes progress. Let me call your attention to the similar work that England is engaged upon in India. Modern caste narrows, restricts, separates. It will crumble before the advance of ideas.'

'Yet some Englishmen, and they are not the least sympathetic to India, nor the most ignorant of her history, regard caste as in the main beneficent. One may easily be too much Europeanized. You yourself condemn many of our ideals as materialistic.'

'True. No reasonable person aims at assimilating India to England; the body is made by the thought that lies behind it. The body politic is thus the expression of national thought, and in India of thousands of years of thought. To Europeanize India is, therefore, an impossible and foolish task. The elements of progress were always actively present in India. As soon as a peaceful Government was there, these have always shown themselves. From the time of the Upanishads down to the present day nearly all our great teachers have wanted to break through the barriers of caste, i.e., caste in its degenerate state, not the original system. What little good you see in the present caste clings to it from the original caste, which was the most glorious social institution. Buddha tried to re-establish caste in its original form. At every period of India's awakening, there have always been great efforts made to break down caste. But it must always be *we* who build up a new India as an effect and continuation of her past, assimilating helpful foreign ideas wherever they may be found. Never can it be *they*; growth must proceed from within. All that England can do is to help India to work out her own salvation. All progress at the dictation of another, whose hand is at India's throat, is valueless, in my opinion. The highest work can only degenerate when slave-labour produces it.'

'Have you given any attention to the Indian National Congress movement?'

'I cannot claim to have given much; my work is in another part of the field. But I regard the movement as significant, and heartily wish it success. A nation is being made out of India's different races. I sometimes think they are no less various than the different peoples of Europe. In the past, Europe has struggled for India's trade, a trade which has played a tremendous part in the civilization of the world; its acquisition might almost be called a turning point in the history of humanity. We see the Dutch, Portuguese, French, and English contending for it in succession. The discovery of America may be traced to the indemnification the Venetians sought in the far distant West for the loss they suffered in the East.'

'Where will it end?'

'It will certainly end in the working out of India's homogeneity, in her acquiring what we may call democratic ideas. Intelligence must not remain the monopoly of the cultured few; it will be disseminated from higher to lower classes. Education is coming, and compulsory education will follow. The immense power of our people for work must be utilized. India's potentialities

are great, and will be called forth.'

'Has any nation ever been great without being a great military power?'

'Yes,' said the Swami without a moment's hesitation, 'China has. Amongst other countries, I have travelled in China and Japan. Today China is like a disorganized mob; but in the heyday of her greatness she possessed the most admirable organization any nation has yet known. Many of the devices and methods we term modern were practised by the Chinese for hundreds and even thousands of years. Take competitive examinations as an illustration.'

'Why did she become disorganized?'

'Because she could not produce men equal to the system. You have the saying that men cannot be made virtuous by Act of Parliament; the Chinese experienced it before you. And that is why religion is of deeper importance than politics, since it goes to the root, and deals with the essentials of conduct.'

'Is India conscious of the awakening that you allude to?'

'Perfectly conscious. The world, perhaps, sees it chiefly in the Congress movement and in the field of social reform; but the awakening is quite as real in religion, though it works more silently.'

'The West and the East have such different ideals of life. Ours seems to be the perfecting of the social state. Whilst we are busy seeing to these matters, Orientals are meditating on abstractions. Here has Parliament been discussing the payment of the Indian army in the Sudan. All the respectable section of the Conservative press has made a loud outcry against the unjust decision of the Government whereas you probably think the whole affair not worth attention.'

'But you are quite wrong,' said the Swami, taking the paper and running his eye over extracts from the Conservative journals. 'My sympathies in this matter are naturally with my country. Yet it reminds one of the old Sanskrit proverb: "You have sold the elephant, why quarrel over the goad?" India always pays. The quarrels of politicians are very curious. It will take ages to bring religion into politics.'

'One ought to make the effort very soon all the same.'

'Yes, it is worth one's while to plant an idea in the heart of this great London, surely the greatest governing machine that has ever been set in motion. I often watch it working, the power and perfection with which the minutest vein is reached, its wonderful system of circulation and distribution. It helps one to realize how great is the Empire, and how great its task. And with all the rest, it distributes thought. It would be worth a man's while to place some ideas in the heart of this great machine so that they might circulate to the remotest part.'

The Swami is a man of distinguished appearance. Tall, broad, with fine features enhanced by his picturesque Eastern dress, his personality is very striking. Swami is a title meaning master; Vivekananda is an assumed name implying the bliss of discrimination. By birth he is a Bengali, and by education, a graduate of Calcutta University. The Swami has taken the vow of *sannyâsa*, renunciation of all property, position, and name. His gifts as an orator are high. He can speak for an hour and a half without a note or the slightest pause for a word. Towards the end of September his lectures at St. George's Road will be resumed for a few weeks before his departure for Calcutta.

(*The above piece I have found in* India *—a record and review of Indian affairs, published monthly from London, and then edited by Gordon Hewart—in its issue of August 1896. Who was the recorder of the interview, I mean C. S. B., I have not been able to find out. However, the episode of an interview is highly interesting, especially because of Swami Vivekananda's opinion about the Indian National Congress.*— SANTOSH KUMAR CHATTERJI).

A TURNING POINT IN INDIAN EDUCATION

By Mrs. Swarnaprabha Sen

In order to understand the import of the modern' system of education and weigh the present state of things, it is necessary to know about the circumstances which have led to this new order of things; and we should do well to take stock of the condition previously in existence and of the processes that were at work. The decline of the Moghul Empire was followed by confusion in the country and ruin of all cultural and educational traditions. Science, art, literature—all the varieties of culture—everything was neglected. Absence of a strong Power in the centre seems to have resulted in the want of stability which breathed an inertia into the people, and that side of human intellect which requires peaceful cultivation and patient observation, was altogether neglected.

India of the eighteenth century was in no way reminiscent of the glorious India described by foreign travellers such as Fa Hien and Hiuen Tsang. Indian statesmanship, whose records had been in the past a tribute to the virtue and efficiency of the social and political conditions, was then far from the highest ideals. Learning was confined to a limited circle, and even there the standard was anything but commendable. Only a few people seem to have tried to maintain the ancient tradition and kept the light of Oriental learning dimly burning. Tols, madrasas, and maktabs there were; but there was very little life in the teaching, and the result was not quite satisfactory. Learning implied only a smattering of knowledge of the religious doctrines of the different classes, Hindus and Moslems. Not only as regards art and literature was the condition deplorable, but there was a general tone of degradation, and lack of culture spread through all things.

Though there were some brilliant writers like Bharatchandra in Bengal, the general state of inertia present in the society was manifest in a certain spirit of decadence in the literary region; and we find the decadent nature revealed in the themes of the literature. Imagination, the greatest virtue in a creative writer, did not carry him to any soaring heights. Political confusion and the unsettled state of things were responsible for the fact that no work of any outstanding merit was composed. Muhammedan influence had brought about changes in the language, literature, thoughts, and ideas, in the religious faith as well as in dress, toilet and cooking. In some respects, the introduction of Persian as the court language, had, in the opinion of some people, a deterrent effect on the indigenous language. There are, on the other hand, critics who seem to think that our language received an impetus from the Moslem chiefs and was raised to a higher status. Hindus and Muhammedans combined in cultivating our literature, and their difference of faith seems to have been merged in their pursuit of literature. Sufism is known to have left its mark on the thoughts and ideas of the country. That the two communities lived side by side in peace is amply shown in the works of the simple village poets who must have depicted character from real life around them. The enchanting lines of the Persian poet Hafiz had an influence on many great thinkers of the day. This was partly the state of affairs before the Indians came in contact with the West. The idea of communalism is a later development and resultant of many disrupting causes into which it is neither possible nor desirable to enter for the present for purposes of enumeration and discussion.

When a country seeks to acquire fresh strength after a period of lull and decay, the access of new light must come to it through new channels and through an interaction of influences. The channels through which this change was brought about in India are of the West, more particularly of England. Though this contact with England was fraught with such far-reaching consequences for India, it was not a pre-meditated and planned act on behalf of the British.

The British rule in India was in a way an accident in the history of the East India Company, which came to India as a company of merchants to trade with the East and with no intention of founding an empire. Queen Elizabeth never dreamt of the vast empire which in later years became England's greatest asset and the brightest gem in the British crown. When circumstances led Clive to lay the foundation-stone of an empire in India, he thought of the channels of exploitation and not so much of giving education to the people and treating them with justice.

There were, however, some men who had turned their attention to the moral and social conditions of the conquered people even as early as the middle of the eighteenth century. It was Warren Hastings, a more enlightened statesman than Clive, who first felt a sense of responsibility towards the people of the country to be governed; but he believed that if the British were to establish their power in India on a permanent footing, they must try to do so by reviving Indian culture and helping the educational institutions of the country to flourish. Political interests recommended as little interference with the Indian ways of thinking as possible. It must be said that the Government interest was then only lukewarm and the help actually rendered to the cause of education exceedingly meagre. No broad sympathy was manifest and signs of a fresh vigour and healthy inspiration towards a broader outlook on the problem were altogether absent.

Warren Hastings had founded the 'Calcutta Madrasa in 1781, the first educational institution to be founded under the British rule. Then came the Sanskrit College at Benares, which had generous grants from the Government. The Oriental studies received a strong impetus by the foundation of the Asiatic Society in Bengal. An instance of the apathy felt by the first rulers is the rejection of Charles Grant's proposal by the Court of Directors of the Company in 1787. Charles Grant had been in India for several years and had felt sincerely for the people of India and in his proposal suggested a course of English education as a need for the people. His measures were not accepted and the proposal was left at that. Government policy seems to have been the revival of Oriental learning and the keeping up of the Oriental tradition. It was directed by the Parliament in 1813 while granting some loan to the Company that a lakh of rupees should yearly be set apart for educational purposes, 'applied to the revival and improvement of literature, and to the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences'. This was interpreted in a way which meant that the money was to be spent in helping the study of Arabic and Sanskrit.

But the idea expressed by Grant had spread and there was in the country a great demand for a broader education. The Government of Marquis of Wellesley had established the College of Fort William in the beginning of the nineteenth century for the study and training of civilians in the language and literature of the country. Ignorance of the Indian languages and laws and usages of the country meant unavoidable difficulties in the work of administration, and it was decided that a knowledge of the language and laws of the country was indispensable for civil service. In this connection we must mention the Christian missionaries and their work. The Christian missionaries

saw in the spread of education a means of preaching the Gospel. This means of conversion, however, had led them to contribute a great deal towards the cause of education in India. It is a far cry from the Serampore College to the Scottish Church and St. Xavier's in Calcutta, the Forman Christian College in Lahore, and the Madras Christian College, but everywhere the success of their activities is due to the fact that they have been directed towards education primarily and not so much to religious work among the pupils.

Carey, Marshman, and Ward are well-known names in the history of education in Bengal, and no less so is the name of Dr. Alexander Duff of the Free Church of Scotland, Calcutta.

Rev. William Carey was one of the Professors of Sanskrit and Bengali in the College of Fort William. Its students (who were not Indians but young writers in the Company's service) were given practical training in speaking and writing in the vernacular. Essays were written and prizes awarded on subjects dealing with the Indian languages, their position and possibilities, and, among other things, suitability to business. Books, treatises on the Gospel, grammar, and dictionaries began to be written. The College of Fort William was abolished by order of the Government in 1854, and a Board of Examiners set up in its place, among the first members of which were Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Rev. K. M. Banerjee, and Moulvi Mahomed Wujeeh. The College had not only equipped the Civil Service —it had imparted to the Indian languages a new tone and spirit.

The new spirit had infused the people of the country with new ideas, and they were eager for more food for the intellect. The amount of a lakh of rupees was hardly sufficient for the purpose of general education, the rulers were chiefly busy with the work of consolidation of power and authority; they had hardly the time to look beyond the immediate matter in hand. The little time and attention they could devote was employed towards the conservation of the Oriental learning and training of the servants of the Company. The Asiatic Society and the College of Fort William were thus the earliest institutions which they had built up. There was no clear-cut programme for the education of the people, and the time had not yet come when education would be thought of as an important and necessary department of Government. This should not prove surprising to us, because even in England, education became actively a State department only as late as 1870. But the Indian people, now awake to the possibilities of the new culture, were not to be satisfied with only Oriental education. Their aspirations were voiced by Raja Rammohan Ray, who was the pioneer of Western Education in India. Rammohan was strong in his objection to the scheme of a proposed Sanskrit College in Calcutta and had urged on the need of an institution on more modern lines, and with the English language as the medium of instruction. His appeal did not succeed in its immediate objective, and the Government in the beginning saw no reason to move in the matter. It was left to Lord Macaulay, with whom Lord Bentinck had the fullest sympathy, to inaugurate the new system. Macaulay felt convinced of the fact that Government should not continue the old system and the money allotted for education should not be spent either for the teaching of 'false history' etc., or for the missionary work with a view to the spreading of the Christian doctrine. It is remarkable that he admitted that the medium of instruction should be English for the time being only and that the ultimate aim should be education through the medium of the vernaculars of the country. This would ensure a revival and culture of the vernacular languages by the coming generations. He believed that the infusion of Western ideas and science through the English

language would not only help the Government in getting a set of able and efficient assistants but it would also help to improve the Indian languages, then in very poor condition. Some Christian missionaries, Dr. Duff among them, of course insisted that their work deserved special aid and support of the Government which was, much to their annoyance, quite neutral on matters religious at the period.

The first tangible result of Raja Rammohan Ray's activity was the establishment of the Hindu College in Calcutta in 1817. In this connection must be mentioned two names as specially associated with the Raja: David Hare and Sir Edward Hyde East. David Hare, a valuable co-worker, was full of sympathy for the Indians and was a real well-wisher of the people, irrespective of caste or creed. Though not in any official capacity, he was one with the Raja in his belief in the necessity of the European education for India. His love for the people and honest efforts for their uplift were fully appreciated; and out of their love for him, the people of Calcutta erected a monument over his last remains. Sir Edward Hyde East was Chief Judge of the Supreme Court —he maintained a friendly attitude to Indians, supported the proposed project for the Hindu College, and lent official support to the cause.

Though the Hindu College was the result of an inspiration of the Raja, he generously withdrew his name from the managing committee when he found objections made by some members on the ground of his religious views and disregard of all convention. However, the College had been opened, and it had come to stay. The idea of the new type of education had been working silently, and his voice had not been in vain. The Hindu College was started with an Indian staff and Hindu management—it had for its object 'the work of instructing the sons of Hindus in the European and Asiatic languages and sciences', and it is noteworthy that the medium of instruction was English.

Government aid was asked for later, and with it came the condition of partial control by the Government. The change in the staff, the recruitment of English professors, dates back to 1825-1827. The decade 1825-1835, saw the establishment of several schools and educational societies which were helped by the funds set apart for educational purposes in Calcutta. A regular committee of public instruction—Council of Education—now known as the Department of Public Instruction—had been formed in 1825, and we find that there was in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, organized educational work, subsidized by Government, on modern lines when Macaulay came to Calcutta in 1834. 1835 is the year of Macaulay's famous minute. Like Sir Thomas Munro of Madras and Montstuart Elphinstone of Bombay, the name of Lord Macaulay has become universally accepted as one of the pioneers to introduce modern education into India. To him undoubtedly is due the fact that the Government of the day decided to encourage English education and maintained that the language should be English.

The Act of Parliament of 1813 had prescribed that a sum, a lakh of rupees, was to be set apart by the East India Company for the revival and promotion of literature, and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of British territories. When the Committee of Public Instruction met in 1835, there was a division—the conservative party or the Orientalists wanted that the lakh of rupees set aside for educational purposes should be entirely devoted to the cause of Sanskrit and Arabic, whereas others wanted that at least a part of it could be spent towards English education. Macaulay with his remarkable understanding of the situation showed clearly

that there was no bar to the use of a part or whole of the amount for new experiments in education. He proved before the Committee that already there existed in the country an eagerness for English in preference to Arabic and Sanskrit, that English would open up channels of more and more useful knowledge than Arabic and Sanskrit, and, since the Indians 'showed a remarkable aptitude for the language, there was no reason why authorities should not be free to choose and spend the money in a way that seemed the best for the time. His arguments for the English education were accepted by the Committee, which resulted in the resolution that 'His Lordship in Council is of opinion that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone.'

This was indeed a landmark in the history of education in India. Macaulay's minute marks the definite victory of the Western school. The principles adopted were 'first, that Government would maintain an absolute neutrality in religious matters, and secondly, that henceforth all the funds available for educational purposes should be mainly devoted to the maintenance of schools and colleges of Western learning to be taught through the medium of English as the vernacular languages were not yet fit as medium for Western language.' It is also worthy of note that Macaulay's minute did not aim at educating the whole of India—'it is impossible for us, with limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people'. Instead, he had in view a set of people who would, armed with the new education, educate people in general in the new learning, but through the vernaculars refined by them.

This dispute of the Bengal Committee and its decision by the Bengal Government had, however, a general effect all over India. It decided, once for all, the character of 'the instruction to be imparted in Government schools and colleges', and it has actually taken a century to realize the disintegrating effect of an alien language on the country and rouse the people to the full necessity of giving attention to education through the medium of the mother tongue.

The Orientalists were, however, alive to the question of vernacular education. And we find from Mr. Adam's Report of the Committee of Education that the Committee conceived that the formation of a vernacular literature was the ultimate object to which all their efforts must be henceforth directed. They decided to encourage good books in Bengali, good translations from English, and award prizes to the best writers. Teachers were needed for the purpose and the Committee recommended a teacher exclusively for the vernacular for each school they intended to establish in all the District stations.

This recommendation of the Committee and inclination of the people for the vernacular of the country have been doing their work silently, though not with any great success. The present attitude of the educationists, unanimously recognizing the need of attention to the modern Indian languages, and literatures, is, however, a recent development. And much of the credit for the introduction of the vernacular as the medium of instruction in schools and colleges after a century of anglicization, is due to Sir Asutosh and Rabindranath. A study of the facts that led to the gradual anglicization, the diffusion of European knowledge in the country through its schools, is bound to prove interesting. Macaulay's minute had preferred the English language to 'the vernacular dialects of the country'. This was, as is easy to understand, not universally approved, and there arose a dissenting voice which regretted the tendency to prefer Western language, manners, and cus-

toms and neglect the study of the vernacular languages. 'To read English, to speak English, and to dream in English' was not to the liking of all. The system of. education had taken firm root in English. Higher education was carried on by a number of scattered colleges, far below the university rank, and grown out of schools. It now seemed necessary to find out a way of regulating and standardizing the work of these schools, and colleges, and need was felt, therefore, for an institution like the universities of the West which would provide a means of testing the candidates for Government services.

INDIAN WOMEN IN CHANGING TIMES

By Brahmachari Niranjana Chaitanya

What is the present condition of our women? Ancient India recognized the dignity of woman in society, and afforded her full facility for the acquirement of knowledge and spirituality. Later on, these noble ideals were forgotten or neglected, and conservative orthodoxy bound women with many chains of customs and conventions.

Indian women have for long lived within the domestic sphere, though exceptions showing wonderful intellectual and practical capacities have not been rare. But with the passing and changing of times, new ideas, ideals, and aspirations are coming into their life and outlook. These changes are natural and inevitable, and it is not proper to oppose them without proper consideration. Women themselves are discussing their present position, and claiming new rights. This has greatly upset not a few of those who were not prepared for this new trend of things. If we desire to progress, then we have to go forward boldly, and welcome every reform and innovation provided the change is for the better, and carries us nearer to the recognized spiritual ideal of India.

The different problems that face Indian women today are mainly the following: education, marriage, equality of the sexes, and position in society. How far are our women educated? What should be the right type of education for our girls? What should be the true significance of and attitude towards marriage? Should marriage be a partnership, involving mutual rights and duties, as in the West? To what extent is the equality of the sexes justified? Should woman take her place alongside of man in all departments of life—social, cultural, economic, and political? What is her true and legitimate status in society? Should she confine herself to the home and the family, and be content with service to her husband and other members, or should she respond to the call of the new circumstances which require her to come out of the home, and freely share the many physical and intellectual advantages that modern society offers?

Instead of being given a helping hand in the solution of their problems, Indian women have often been treated with indifference and discouragement. In the face of suffering they have shown remarkable patience and sacrifice for which they are traditionally known. If India has to rise, once again, to her position in the vanguard of civilized nations, then Indian women should have a worthy place in the wide structure of our national life.

All those who understand the position of Indian women agree that their education should undergo a change. Ordinarily women in India are looked upon as illiterate. They may be so compared with women in the West.

But Indian women possess an education of a different type, embodying such sterling virtues as sweetness, gentleness, tolerance, simplicity, and love. Does a reform in their education mean the discarding of these virtues in favour of Western ideas and ideals? Any system of education which aims at mere intellectual accomplishment, and does not pay attention to the development of character, is not worth having. Again, it should not be all emotional training only. Our women will be best served by that type of education which helps to develop the faculties of the soul and the mind in harmony with each other. The intellectual and practical aspects of life are not to be alienated from the emotional and the spiritual. Once the ideal towards which our women have to progress is decided upon, the problem of the method of education will solve of itself. Spiritual realization is undoubtedly the supreme ideal to be attained. The education for our women should not fail to present before them the ideal womanhood of India, and enable them to shine at their best in all circumstances of life. India can be proud of a large number of ideal women whom it is worth emulating by contemplating on their character. Though schools have their necessary place in the education of Indian girls, it should be borne in mind that the home has an equally important place in training them for life. The teaching in the school should be such as to afford moral support to the ideals taught at home. The education of the Western model, as taught in schools today, bears little relation to Indian ideals of womanhood, and more often than not, advanced Western education has undermined our traditional ideals to the detriment of social and family life. Scientific knowledge of the West is not to be neglected, but suitably adapted to supplement our own cultural thoughts and activities.

From time immemorial, life in India has centred round the family ideal, and the family is regarded as the proper and characteristic place for woman. The family is symbolic of the community, where women find opportunity, as ideal wives and mothers, to do unselfish service. Indian society is pre-eminently socialistic, and the individual's life and activities are restrained and regulated in the interests of the general good of the community. Marriage is no exception to this characteristic Indian view of life. That is why, in India, parents exercise interest and care in marrying their children; and the children, in their turn, willingly accept the choice of the parents who invariably wish well of their sons and daughters, and can, therefore, be trusted to make the best selection possible. But we feel happy or unhappy by contrast. We desire changes for the sake of novelty and variety more than for progress. Thus it is no wonder that some of our women are anxious to imitate their Western sisters in demanding full freedom to marry as they like. In the West, social life is often individualistic, and marriage is being degenerated into a social contract. In India, marriage through free choice, though recognized, is not looked upon as the highest and best. Sir S. Radhakrishnan observes in *The Hindu View of Life*:

> Marriage is not the end of the struggle, it is but the beginning of a strenuous life where we attempt to realize a larger ideal by subordinating our private interests and inclinations. Service of a common ideal can bind together the most unlike individuals.

Parents, in arranging the marriage of their children, satisfy themselves regarding the lineage, health, status, and such other requirements of the parties. This ensures a happy family life, and the birth of children useful to the community at large.

Should Indian women have freedom to divorce? The idea of divorce, as it is in vogue in the West, is not welcome to the Indian mind. Marriage, as already stated, is a sacrament to the Hindu; it is a spiritual union for life, not merely for the preservation of the

race but also for the accomplishment of higher and nobler purposes. How many women in India sincerely desire the system of divorce to be introduced into our society? Those who advocate legislation are of the opinion that a large section of Indian women is in favour of divorce. Is this a fact? Do our women find their life at home a drudgery, and do they feel themselves being tyrannized over by men? On the contrary, Indian women find domestic life full of joy. They feel proud in looking after their children and managing the household smoothly and efficiently. Man is busy outside the home, earning his livelihood, and performing various other functions. Woman is the ruling deity at home where she exercises a great amount of influence. Any one who has closely watched the part played by Indian women in the domestic sphere will not think their position to be as bad as it is often painted.

What about the equality of the sexes? Have our women any status in society? Well, this is an imported idea from the West. Women in Western society are comparatively more aggressive, and enjoy greater freedom in many walks of life. They are more educated in the sense that they possess a greater amount of knowledge of the things of the world, and thus fit in easily with the trend of modern civilization. But have these made women in the Western countries any better and happier? If she has gained in one direction, she has lost in another. Writing on the condition of women in the West, a European lady says,

> Woman has today the vote, glory, power, independence, often has wealth, freedom to do what she pleases; but she does not have love and affection, none to think of her and of whom she can think; she is alone, alone and desolate.

Indians who have not lived in Western society for long, and who are ignorant of the code of etiquette and convention (which act as safeguards) prevailing in that society, advocate absolute equality and unrestricted social freedom between men and women. Many Westerners, especially Christian missionaries, have often condemned the treatment of women in India. They have levelled uncharitable criticism against Hindu society, the condition of widows, early marriage, and the *purdah* system, without making any effort to understand our social motives and purposes. But Indians have long learnt to treat such baseless slander with the indifference it deserves.

Western ideas hold their sway on every aspect of Indian life; and to follow the ways of Western women is considered a sign of modern culture. But before doing so, let our women judge for themselves whether the time-honoured ideals of Indian womanhood are not more noble, dignified, and spiritually sound than the modern pet notions of the West. Mrs. Steele, who has had the occasion to study Indian life for a quarter of a century, says, 'In regard to the general position of women in India, I think it is rather better than our own.' Sister Nivedita, who had devoted herself entirely to the cause of Indian women, referring to the change in outlook that was gradually coming over Indian social life, said,

> Shall we, after centuries of an Indian womanhood, fashioned on the pattern of Sitâ, of Sâvitri, of Râni Ahalyâ Bai, descend to the creation of coquettes and *divorcées*? Shall the Indian Padmini be succeeded by the Greek Helen? . . . change there must be. But new learning shall add to the old gravity and wisdom, without taking from the ancient holiness. Wider responsibilities shall make the pure more pure. Deeper knowledge shall be the source of a new and grander tenderness.

Critics are often unsparing in charging Hindu religion with neglect of women and with placing them in a disadvantageous position in society. The Hindu scriptures give as high a place of honour to woman as to man; and both are allowed equal right to the highest spiritual realization. 'The wife and husband, being the equal halves of one substance, are equal in every respect; therefore, both should join and take equal part

(*Rigveda*, 5.61.8). The laws of Manu in all work, religious and secular are no less emphatic in enjoining on every Hindu a just and honourable treatment of woman. 'Where women are honoured, there the Devas are pleased; but where they are dishonoured, no sacred rite yields rewards' (III.56).

Social life in India, unlike that in the West, is organic and sound, and the relation between the sexes is spiritual and altruistic. The ideal of wifehood, in India, has been raised to the highest standard; and motherhood has always been considered the highest position of honour and prestige in the life of every woman. Manu says, 'But the teacher is ten times more venerable than the sub-teacher, the father a hundred times more than the teacher, but the mother a thousand times more than the father' (II.145). The fire of spiritual idealism and religious fervour that is maintained in every Hindu household is mainly due to the women.

Does it mean that all women should enter the family life? It will be the greatest glory of India if some of her daughters take up a life of self-control and self-discipline, and live up to the noble ideals of Brahmacharya in quest of spiritual realization. They need not be discouraged if they desire to live the life of renunciation and selfless service. Swami Vivekananda expressed, more than once, his desire to found a separate Math for women, where they would live as Brahmacharinis, and be taught Sanskrit, scriptures, literature, modern science, and the different kinds of domestic work. The Swami wanted that institutions for Indian women should be started on our own national lines, and in accordance with the spirit of Hindu religious ordinances. In such institutions spirituality, sacrifice, and self-control would be the guiding motto. Having undergone their course of training, the celibate nuns would go forth to the towns and villages as teachers and preachers. Thus did the Swami visualize the spread of female education throughout the land, and through that the regeneration of Indian women. And those women who would enter family life, after receiving the training in such national institutions, would serve to inspire and guide their husbands and children in noble and heroic ideals.

Indian women should have great faith in themselves, and envisage the glory of their future even as they should remember the glory of the past. They possess all those sterling qualities of head and heart, which enable them, boldly and admirably, to tackle the problems before the country. 'The Indian people know that there is no darkness that a true wife will not enter at her husband's side, no hardship she will not undertake, no battle that, on his behalf, she will not fight' (Sister Nivedita). The solution to woman's problems lies in her own hands. It is she who has to impress on her husband the necessity for educating and elevating her sex. It is she who has to make her son maintain the cause of women. Indian women should come forward to take up their own problems, and decide for themselves what changes they shall make in keeping with their own national ideas and ideals.

TRANCE, SAMADHI, AND VISIONS

By Swami Saradananda

I

It will be no exaggeration to say that before Shri Ramakrishna came and revealed himself to the world, the Calcutta public, whether educated or not, were completely in the dark about such things as ecstasy, *samâdhi*, and supernormal visions and experiences of the spiritual world. The ignorant had a queer idea of these based on awe and wonder; and the new intelligentsia, then swimming merrily down the stream of foreign culture, divorced of all spirituality as they were, concluded that such visions, etc., were impossible and mere figments of the brain. The physical transformations consequent on Divine ecstasies appeared to them as a sort of epilepsy or nervous derangement. Although conditions have now taken a turn for the better, there are still very few who can really understand the true meaning of trance and *samâdhi*. Besides, if one is to get even a faint idea of how Shri Ramakrishna stayed at the threshold of the Absolute, one needs must have some knowledge of the mysteries of *samâdhi*. We shall, therefore, try at present to explain some of these to the readers.

Whatever is beyond the grasp of the ordinary intellect is generally considered to be abnormal. But the mystic experiences of the spiritual world will always be beyond the perspective of ordinary minds, for that presupposes initiation, training, and constant practice. Such mystic visions and experiences, etc., make the spiritual aspirant progressively holier, and fill him increasingly with fresh energy and new realization, and thus lead him gradually to eternal bliss. Is it reasonable, therefore, to decry such visions, etc., as mental perversions? It must be admitted on all hands that derangements of every kind make man weaker and upset his mental equipoise. But since the results of spiritual experiences are wholly dissimilar, their causes must also be wholly different; and, therefore, these can never be decried as mental perversions or diseases.

Mystic experiences always come in the form of such visions, etc., although it must be admitted that the highest spiritual bliss cannot be attained so long as man does not reach and continue in a state of absolute poise and non-duality after the cessation of all mental modifications. As Shri Ramakrishna used to say, 'When one runs a thorn, one should extract it with a second thorn and then throw them both away.' This world-delusion has come as a result of our turning away from the Lord. With the sublation of all these delusive experiences of sights and tastes already mentioned, man is led gradually to the plane of non-duality. Then does dawn on him the implication of the words of the seers: 'He is indeed Bliss!', and then does he reach the *summum bonum* of life - this is the process. All creeds, all realizations, and all visions, etc., of the religious world are meant only for this consummation. Swami Vivekananda used to speak of these visions, etc., as milestones on the way to progress. The reader should not, therefore, conclude that spirituality ends with the deepening of a certain state or the vision of a few deities through meditation; if he thinks so, he will be gravely mistaken. It is due to such a misconception that spiritual aspirants are often misled, as a result of which they become exclusive in their views, and quarrelsome. When love of God is thus misdirected, men become fanatical and unprogressive. That is

the greatest stumbling block on the path of devotion and that is the result of mental myopia.

Others still there are, who with their faith pinned on such visions, etc., conclude that those who are not thus blessed are not spiritual at all. To them spirituality and miracle-mongering are synonymous. But instead of leading to spiritual fulfilment, that only opens wide the gates of all-round and progressive imbecility. Anything which does not reinforce firm determination and strength of character, which does not prompt man to defy the whole world by taking his stand on truth, and which binds down man to this world of lust and greed instead of freeing him from the least tinge of passion, must necessarily be outside the realm of spirituality. If super-normal visions persist without producing such effects on one's life, then one should know that one is still outside the domains of spirituality and that those visions are mere hallucinations and have no real worth. If, on the other hand, one is replenished with such energy, even though one may not have these visions, one may rest assured that one is following the right path and will be blessed with true visions in time.

A friend of ours who noticed that many of the disciples of Shri Ramakrishna had such ecstasies and visions while he himself had none, in spite of his frequent visits to the Master, once told Shri Ramakrishna of his disappointment with tears in his eyes. 'You are too simple, my child,' said Shri Ramakrishna, consoling him, 'to think that to be the acme of spiritual life, and that to be the all-important thing! Be assured that true faith and selflessness are far higher than that. Narendra (Swami Vivekananda) has hardly any such vision, but look at his faith, his selflessness, his mental vigour and determination.'

In the state when passions have been attenuated through firm determination, unswerving faith, and unflagging devotion, and the spiritual aspirants are ready for complete union with the Lord in the non-dual plane, then in a rare mind there arises sometimes, as a result of past actions, the holy desire, 'I shall serve others, I will do that which will make many happy.' Due to this desire he is no longer able to remain fully established in the non-dual plane. He comes down a little from that supreme height to dwell again on the subject-object plane. But his ego thinks of itself as God's servant, son, or part, and is consequently ever in intimate communion with Him. With that ego it is no longer possible to run after lust and greed. That ego has seen God as the supreme essence of this world and is no more tempted by sense objects. It accepts only that much of the world that is helpful to its life's aim or mission. Those who were once bound but have now attained perfection through spiritual practice and are somehow passing away the remaining portion of their lives in God-intoxication, are called the *jivanmuktas* (liberated even while in this life). But those who are born with those special relationships to God and are never bound to this world like ordinary mortals are called in the scriptures the *âdhikârika purushas* (privileged ones), the *ishvarakotis* (god-like), and the *nityasiddhas* (ever-free). There are, again, those aspirants who, after attaining non-duality never return to this world either in the present or in any future life to serve others. These are called the *jivakotis* (man-like) and we heard from the Master that these form the majority.

So far as realization of unity with Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute is concerned, there is, again, a difference in degree even among those who after attaining non-duality, return from that plane of God-absorption for the good of the world as already described. Some of them have only a distant vision of that Sea of Ecstasy, others have approached nearer and touched It, and still others have sipped a little out of that Sea. As

Shri Ramakrishna said 'The divine sage Nârada returned after a distant vision of that Sea, Shukadeva only touched It thrice, and Shiva, the world teacher, took three sips of It, as a consequence of which he lies prostrate like a corpse.' To be merged in this non-duality even for a moment is called *nirvikalpa samâdhi*.

Just as there are grades of non-dualistic realization, so are there different degrees of success in the lower states, or those relationships with God, such as passivity, servantship, friendship, sonship, etc., which lead the aspirant to that non-duality. Some rest contented with the full realization of one of these, while to others is vouchsafed only an inkling of them. The complete realization of any one of these lower states is called in the *yoga-shâstra savikalpa samâdhi*.

In both the paths, however, be it the one leading to *savikalpa samâdhi* or the other ending in *nirvikalpa samâdhi*, there occur to the aspirant certain strange physical transformations and wonderful visions, which, again, manifest themselves diversely in diverse persons. In some, the transformations and visions occur along with the slightest experience, while in others even very deep experiences are not accompanied by the slightest manifestation. 'Even if an elephant or two enter a small pond,' said Shri Ramakrishna, 'the water is agitated and thrown into waves and foams; but should even four score such elephants enter a lake, the water is as placid as ever.' It cannot, therefore, be asserted that physical transformations or visions, etc., are sure indications of the deepening of any spiritual mood. If one has to measure the intensity of any mood one has to infer it, as already mentioned, from steadfastness, selflessness, and strength of character, as well as cessation of hankering after worldly things. This touchstone alone can find out how much of alloy there is in mystic communion; apart from this there is no other test. Therefore, it becomes quite evident that it is only among those who have given up all kinds of mundane desires and have realized their pure, enlightened, and free self, and not among those who are caught in the snares of lust and greed, that we can have a full and perfect picture of passivity, servantship, friendship, sonship, consortship, or for that matter of any spiritual mood. A man blinded by passion is conscious only of its influence. How can he understand the craving of a soul which is untouched by passion? We shall try to state here the philosophical implications of trance as we have learnt it from the Master.

The reader will have a fuller grasp of the subject when we have added some more facts. From what we have said before about the difference in degree noticeable among aspirants so far as their progress in the various moods like passivity, servantship, etc., is concerned, it should not be concluded that even God's incarnations are somehow circumscribed in their power of realization. They can, in fact, not only manifest in their lives, at will, any one of the moods to its utmost possibility, they can also advance so far in their realization of God that it is quite beyond the power of all others, be they the *jivanmuktas*, the ever-free, or the godlike. For a mere mortal it is never possible to come down to the phenomenal plane from the state of perfect unity with Bliss and Beatitude Absolute. This is possible only for those who are known as incarnations. The Vedas and other scriptures are nothing but records of their super-conscious experiences; and it is no wonder that these experiences should at times surpass all that is recorded therein. 'The experiences here (meaning in himself)', said Shri Ramakrishna, 'have far excelled what is written in the Vedas and the Vedantas.' It is because Shri Ramakrishna was foremost among such souls that he was able to return, from a full and unbroken ab-

sorption in the non-dual state for a continuous period of six months, to the relative plane 'for the good of many' and 'for setting an example to others'. That was very strange indeed. It will not be out of place here to place some of these facts before the reader.

On the third day of his initiation into *sannyâsa* by Totapuri, the Master entered into *nirvikalpa samâdhi* or the highest non-dual realization of God, as it is described in Vedanta. By then the Master had finished all the *tântrika* practices. And the erudite *bhairavi* (who used to be referred to as the *brâhmani* by the Master), who had helped the Master by collecting for him all the requisites for those practices and showing him their proper use, must have been staying near the Master at Dakshineswar. For we have heard from the Master himself that the *bhairavi* used to warn him thus against mixing too intimately with Totapuri: 'My child, don't mix so much with him: their ways are too dry. If you keep his company too often your trances and God-intoxication will all be undermined.' But the Master did not heed this. On the contrary he was constantly lost in Vedantic discussions and realizations.

Totapuri left Dakshineswar after a stay of eleven months. The Master then resolved: 'I shall no longer continue in the subject-object world, but shall plunge into uninterrupted and non-dual communion with God or in Advaita realization.' And his action, too, accorded with his resolve. That was a strange chapter! Such ideas even as 'I shall eat, I shall sleep, I shall cleanse myself,' never crossed his mind—leave aside talking to others! My and mine, thou and thine ceased to exist then! There were neither two nor one! For how can there be a cognition of unity unless there be a memory of duality as well? The mind stops to function there —it is absolute calm! Only

किमपि सततबोधं केवलानन्दरूपं
निरुपममतिवेलं नित्यमुक्तं निरीहम् ।
निरवधिगगनाभं निष्कलं निर्विकल्पं
हृदि कलयति विद्वान् ब्रह्मपूर्णं समाधौ ॥
प्रकृतिविकृतिशून्यं भावनातीतभावम् ।

Viveka-chudâmani, 408-9.

—Only Bliss, Bliss—without limits, direction, relation, form, or name! Only the unembodied soul poised in its unspeakable bliss beyond all the states that can be thought or dreamt of, beyond everything on a plane of absolute existence! The Master was then in that inexplicable state which is described in the scriptures as the 'ravishing of the self by the Self'.

THE INDO-ARYAN VIEW OF LIFE'S BETTERMENT

By G. A. Chandavarkar, M.A.

Whatever remarkably identical or diametrically opposite views might have been expressed by scientists and philosophers on the whence and the whither of human life, there seems to be no difference of opinion on the paramount need of its betterment. All are unanimous in holding that desire for progress is instinctive in man, and in spite of the compositeness and complexity of human nature there can be no denying the fact that there has been always an inward, strong urge in man towards *Satyam*, *Shivam*, and *Sundaram*—Truth, Happiness, and Beauty—his three great aspirations and achievements in some form or other. The paths trodden to reach the goal might have been different according to the environments and the traditions of a particular race. It is worth one's while to note a few aspects of this question from the Indo-Aryan standpoint.

Various Views of Life

Throughout the Vedic and the post-Vedic periods of Sanskrit literature various striking metaphors are employed to evaluate life. Sometimes it is spoken of as a *sangrâma* (battle) between the forces of good and evil. Not unoften it is referred to as *leelâ* (sport or game) which has been played for ages together with definite laws. Many a time it is compared to a wheel with its upward and downward movements. Some speak of it as a bubble bursting into nothing or *mâyâ* or an illusion. For poets like Bhartrihari it has been a big mark of interrogation. While to Huxley it is a chess-board, to Spencer it is the Unknowable. To Bunyan it is a pilgrimage with a heavy burden on the back. To a character in Shakespeare's drama it is an 'idiot's tale'. Each view seems to contain a grain of truth in it. The final word regarding its betterment is said by Shri Shankaracharya. He holds the view: 'This human life is the most precious gift and has been acquired after paying a heavy price. Save it before the barge gets itself wrecked.' It is considered by some as the finest of fine arts in the presentation of which mind and imagination play a great part. If a painter draws a fine picture on a rich canvas, if a sculptor carves out a beautiful image out of a rude stone, if a musician sings a melodious song to entrap the mind, seers and prophets present it in its various aspects as a thing of beauty and joy for ever. But the experiences of a common man at times take a different view altogether. Life to him is gloomy and dark. Everywhere he sees misery, poverty, and suffering. Even then he seeks happiness and feels the dire need of improvement.

Different Methods

For the betterment of life, then, various methods are suggested by different thinkers. These can be classified under five heads: (1) Self-sufficient method in which we are to rely on our resolutions, will-power, and effort to combat evils. (2) Self-crucifixion method where we are to concentrate on a single sin, repent, and improve. (3) Mimetic method where we try to imitate the virtues. (4) Diary method, which is also called the Franklin method, where we watch week by week, jotting down our defects in a diary and trying to remove them. (5) Alchemy of Influence. This law of influence means that we ought to study the biography of some one great man, habitually admire him and try to miror him. Lives of great men who have dedicated their lives to some cause will be our guides in this matter. All these methods have their own uses and limitations as well.

The Indo-Aryan Method

This may be styled as the yogic method also. Each aspirant is asked to undergo a certain form of discipline. First of all he has to practise concentration and gradually through *prânâyâma* —breathing exercises and control of the mind—he has to develop will-power. Non-attachment practice is also to follow. The modern world is full of hurry, speed, and violent activities. Lack of relaxation and peace of mind renders both the mind and body incapable of resistance to various ailments. Prayers devoutly offered and silent contemplation of the beauties of Nature or the glories of God act as a mental tonic, and spiritual strength is gradually gained. The *Mantra Yoga*, repetitions of *mantras* like *Gâyatri* and *japa* are also said to be quite helpful. Always filling our minds with good thoughts and ideas the atmosphere all around is rendered wholesome. Goodness is thereby radiated. Power of words which is spoken of highly in *tantric* literature, is undeniably great. We easily become what we constantly think after. *Sâtvika âhâra* (good food), *sâtvika vichâra* (good thoughts), and *sâtvika karma* (good deeds), however humble they may be, all will facilitate the course of development. These are the stages of soul culture which have

directed the courses of the lives of all great men in all spheres of human activity. The curse of the modern materialistic civilization lies in the fact that great importance is attached to the growth of external possessions, and the internal growth is neglected. 'Know Thyself.' Self-introspection is the sore need of the moment. Seek *shânti*, peace. It is more a psychological process. Anything built on treaties, pacts, or agreements is ephemeral. Charters meant for the salvation of particular races—white or brown—mean scraps of paper. It is the change of heart, more than the changes in the methods of warfare, that is more permanent; and, therefore, essential. Bellicose instincts can be curbed only by soul-force. That is the desideratum of life's betterment according to the Indo-Aryan conception.

THE LATEST AND THE OLDEST PHILOSOPHY

By V. Subrahmanya Iyer

Among the many *philosophic* thinkers that have laid emphasis on the inseparability of science and philosophy, the well-known John Dewey says, 'Only what has been scientifically verifiable supplies the *entire* content of philosophy.' And now, this has been further supported by the *latest* statement of the great *scientific* authority, Sir James Jeans, in his highly valuable publication, *Physics and Philosophy*. Two of the essential points to which he draws our attention are:

(1) The material world as defined above constitutes the whole world of reality. . . . Now that we find we can best understand the course of events in terms of waves knowledge, there is a certain presumption that *reality* is wholly *mental*. . . . In this and in other ways, modern physics has moved in the direction of *mentalism*.

(2) So far as our knowledge is concerned, *causality* becomes *meaningless*. . . . Experiments that are precisely identical, so far as phenomena go, may produce entirely different results. . . . In this way *causality disappears* from the world of phenomena.

Here, the object of the following paragraphs is to point out that similar conclusions had been arrived at, *thousands of years* ago, in India, by her philosophers who were also scientific in their outlook. To quote some of them (in translation):

I

(1) Those things that exist within the mind as well as those that exist *without*, are all mere *mental* constructions (ideas). —*Mândukya Upanishad Kârikâ*.

(2) This *perceived world* of duality characterized by subject-object relationship is verily an act of the *mind*.—*Do*.

(3) *The whole universe* is a modification of the *mind*. . . . The universe issues from the mind as sparks from fire.—*Mundaka Upanishad, Shankara's Commentary*.

(4) The universe is but a *state* of the *mind*.—*Ashtâvakra Samhitâ*.

(5) *Body*, heaven, hell, etc., are all mere mental *constructions*.—*Do*.

(6) The *mind* is *virtually* the *external* world.—*Panchadashi*.

(7) The *mind* continually produces . . . all *sense-objects without* exception.—*Vivekachudâmani*.

(8) *All* this (phenomenal universe) is the manifestation of the *mind*.—*Do*.

(9) The *mind* is the *essence* of *all the things* that are manifest.—*Mahâbhârata*.

(10) One should look upon this *universe* as a construction of the *mind*; now seen, the next moment destroyed (changed).—*Bhâgavata*.

(11) Where is the universe gone? By whom is it removed, or where has it merged? It was just now seen by me. Has it ceased to exist?—*Vivekachudâmani*.

(12) From *mind* (*manas*) indeed are all these entities born.—*Taittiriya Upanishad*.

(13) This great, endless, infinite Reality is but purely mental (Vijnânaghana).—*Brihadâranyaka Upanishad*.

(14) The universe is nothing but a mode of *mind* (*manas*)—The mind manifests itself as the external world—Time is but a mode of the mind.—*Vasishta Râmâyana*.

(15) The whole world is the result of mere *mental* construction in me.—*Jivanmukti Viveka*.

II

(1) Men of discrimination hold (stick to) the principle of the absolute negation of causality.—*Mândukya Upanishad Kârikâ.*

(2) The inability, the ignorance (absence of knowledge), and the impossibility of proof of the existence of the order and sequence clearly lead the wise (rational) to stick to 'non-causality'.—*Do.*

(3) From the standpoint of the true nature of things, we find that the so-called cause is after all no cause.—*Do.*

(4) The wise support causality only for the sake of those who being afraid of non-manifestation of things (in daily life) stick to what appears to them to be real.—*Do.*

(5) As long as a man persists in the belief in causality he will find the working of cause and effect. But when the attachment to the notion of causality vanishes, cause and effect become non-existent.—*Do.*

(6) Having thus realized the truth of the absence of causality one attains to that (the highest etc.).—*Do.*

It is needless to add more quotations. In 1937 I had the privilege and pleasure of meeting Sir James Jeans under his hospitable roof at Dorking, and of talking to him on this very subject. I am now drawing attention to this only because such great truths have been declared by Hindu thinkers of the past to be of the very highest value to all mankind. They will lead, it is said, positively to universal peace and well-being if only we learn to love Truth 'Universal'.

It is of no consequence where this truth comes from—Europe, America, or Asia.

The only question which any wise man can ask himself and any honest man will ask himself, is whether a doctrine is *true*. . . . There is no alleviation for the sufferings of mankind except *veracity* of thought and of action and the resolute facing of the world as it is.—Thomas Huxley.

There is, however, left a doubt in my mind, after studying the modern scientists and philosophers, Eastern as well as Western, as to their meaning of 'Truth'. If they should first define this term and then show that what they say agrees with their definition, the world —not to say anything about the individual seekers after truth—would be all the better. Otherwise every one will continue to think that what one knows is truth, and will continue to be wrangling with others, obstructing all approach to harmony on which alone depends the well-being of humanity.

That alone is truth which makes it possible to free the world in which we *now* live, from sorrow.—*Mahâbhârata.*

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

The present issue deals mainly with some important phases in the lives of Shri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. But there are other interesting topics from very able pens. . . . To Swami Nikhilananda, head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedanta Centre of New York, we are indebted for his presentation of *Swami Vivekananda as the Spirit of India* . . . . Mr. Santosh Kumar Chatterji has also laid us under a debt by finding out for us from the pages of *India* an interview with *Swami Vivekananda in London*, which has not been included so far in any of our publications. . . . From Swami Saradananda's *Gurubhâva—Purvârdha* we translate a portion of an important chapter, of which a few more instalments will be published in the coming issues. . . . Mrs. Swarnaprabha Sen's *A Turning Point in Indian Education* is but the first instalment of a series of articles on education. . . . Brahmachari Niranjana Chaitanya's *Indian Women in Changing Times* is timely, precise, and compre-

hensive . . . . Mr. G. A. Chandavarkar's *The Indo-Aryan View of Life's Betterment* is thought-provoking and full of practical hints. . . . Mr. V. Subrahmanya Iyer is well known for Vedantic scholarship and particularly for his exposition of the *avasthâtraya* doctrine. The present article, *The Latest and the Oldest Philosophy*, lends scriptural support to that idealistic point of view.

Science and Religion

It is often the case that many scientists and scientific-minded metaphysicians view the religious attitude to life as unscientific and irrational, though truly religious men do not fail to understand and appreciate the scientific outlook. While religion leads man, through various paths, to the highest spiritual experience, the content of which is ever an unchanging permanent Reality, the God of the scientist, conceived out of mind and matter, finds no rest from the process of 'evolution and emergence' from time to time. Dr. Julian Huxley, the renowned biologist, writing in the *Hindusthan Standard*, says that scientific humanism provides 'a real and lively basis for faith in the business of living, and also a spur to effort by reminding man that he is now the sole trustee for any further progress to be made by life.' Thus humanism displaces religion, and human well-being is equated to material prosperity.

The comparative study of religion in action has demonstrated clearly enough that the character and qualities ascribed to God change and develop with the growth of human knowledge and human social institutions. A great deal of what we mean by the word *God* is man-made . . . . the scientific humanist pushes on to what he regards as the logical conclusion—that the idea of God is entirely man-made, resulting from man's tendency to ascribe something like human personality to things and forces which he does not understand.

Scientific humanists have no use for the Personal aspect of God, for they have 'found relief of mind and soul in dropping the idea of a Personal God altogether'. To them the *Avatâra* is at best a Superman, a personification of the forces of Nature and of the psychological forces within man. The idea of a Personal God has obtained almost in every religion, and Buddhists and Jains worship the founders of their religions in precisely the same way as the others worship a Personal God. Whether one likes it or not, the fact remains (and the scriptures declare) that God manifests Himself in various forms to do good to humanity. None can pretend to assume a scientific attitude and afford to ignore the intuitive experiences of men of realization who are blessed with the unmistakable revelation 'I have seen the soul, I have seen God'. One cannot but agree with the American divine who said that for those who believed in God no explanation was necessary, and for those who did not believe in God no explanation was possible.

Prof. Huxley maintains that through evolution the living matter has been steadily introduced to new possibilities of experience and knowledge of achievement and control.

There has been advance in the moral as well as the material sphere, as the abolition of slavery and the rise of humanitarian movements bear witness. There have been ups and downs, terrible bloodshed and misery by the way, but the general trend has been upwards.

The scientist visualizes the ushering in of a perfect society with peace and plenty through his evolutionary theory of continuous progress which takes it for granted that evil and misery are being continually eliminated from the world while good is ever on the increase until at last only good will remain. But experience shows that man's susceptibility to misery and suffering increases with his susceptibility to happiness and enjoyment. Though holding the view that in the modern world science alone can provide the necessary basis for further advance, Prof. Huxley admits the limited scope of scientific research.

Existence itself remains a problem. . . . the origin of the universe is now and probably for ever will be beyond the range

of our knowledge. He (the scientific humanist) is content to accept existence as a fact. Then, instead of having to find purpose in everything, he is content to find out how things work. . . . And the humanist, however scientific, can still have a religious attitude to life. . . . He can have ideals which he feels to be of transcendent importance, and aims which he pursues with a truly religious fervour. . . . (But) they are to him nothing mystical or supernatural, but hard facts of our daily experience.

Religion without spirituality is not worth the name; and renunciation and self-restraint are the real beginning of religion. The social edifice that the scientist attempts to build on entirely material values such as economics, politics, and ethics, ignoring the intrinsic spiritual worth of man, can hardly turn out to be an ideal place to live in. Though scientific advancement is in itself a blessing to humanity, it will prove a formidable engine of destruction unless man learns to exercise restraint over his lower emotions, and uses such advancement to the best interests of society. If men of science are inclined to acknowledge existence as a 'mystery', and feel sure that 'some things are of value in and for themselves,' and yet are unable to account for them, then they should be willing to recognize a higher approach to truth than science. The conclusions of modern science take us nearer to the field of spirit, and the Darwinian principles are held to be 'anachronistic' by scientists themselves. Sir E. Ray Lancaster says,

We believe in the great importance of science and scientific method not merely for the advancement of the material well-being of the community, but as essential to the true development of the human mind and spirit.

Every religious system has upheld the divinity of man, and the immense possibilities of human endeavour and achievement. But to follow the path of a goalless progress, and lay greater emphasis on things material than on those spiritual by rejecting the intuitive experiences of mystics and prophets, is not certainly the way to build a better human society.

Famine and Over-population

Famines have occurred in India in the past mainly due to natural causes resulting in failure of crops. But everyone is agreed that the recent devastating famine that took a heavy toll of human lives in Bengal in particular, and in certain other parts of India was, in a large measure, 'man-made' and that it could have been prevented if the pre-famine situation in the country had been handled with greater care and foresight. Various causes have been adduced as contributing to this calamity, and one such is said to be over-population. At the annual meeting of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, speakers asserted that 'uncontrolled growth of population was a threat to permanent world peace.' They were of the opinion that over-population, *especially in the Far East*, was one of the spectres that might haunt the post-war world. Dr. Henry Pratt Fairchild is reported to have explained to the others that

in ten years India had increased its population by fifty million—a rise which even the best developed and most resourceful country could not experience without facing extreme disaster whenever an emergency situation such as war arose.

Over-population was never held to be one of the contributory causes of famine even by those who were directly associated with the administration in India. A close examination of facts shows the unsoundness of such explanations. Forty years ago Romesh C. Dutt wrote :

The increase of population in India is slow, slower than in England and Wales, slower than in eighteen other countries out of twenty-eight for which figures are available.

More recently, the American authoress, Kate Mitchell, alluding to the myth of over-population being the cause of the Indian famine, writes in her book *India—an American View* as follows :

A prevalent but fallacious theory about India's poverty is that it is the result of

'over-population'. The actual rate of increase has been markedly less than that of any European country. Between 1880 and 1930, the population of England and Wales increased by 54 p.c., that of India by 32 p.c. Only in the decade from 1921 to 1931 was the rate of increase in India 10.6 p.c. as compared with 14.2 p.c. in the United States, higher than that of England and other European countries. Indian poverty, however, does not date from 1921. Another implication of the Malthusian critics of India's birth-rate is that the growth of population has outstripped the growth in the volume of food produced. This is not the case. Between 1910 and 1930, population increased about 17 p.c., food production by about 30 p.c. It is true that the present production of food is wholly inadequate, but the reasons for this inadequacy lie in the system of production and the failure to develop the available resources, not in any absolute over-population. In fact, there is every reason to believe that, by making full use of her resources, India could support a far larger population than at present. . . . It may be granted that under existing conditions food production is inadequate for the population, but should this lead to the conclusion that the population must be reduced, and not that the existing methods of production must be changed?

(Quoted from the *Indian Social Reformer*).

Europe and America are already concerned over their gradually falling birth-rate, and national leaders have been thinking how best to effect an increase in population. But Indians are advised to 'cut the coat according to the cloth'. History reveals that the rapid growth of indigence in India within the last two centuries is due to other causes, more potent and direct, than merely the increase in her population.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA. BY M. TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA. *Published by the Shri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. xxviii+987. Price Rs. 15.*

The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna is the English translation of the *Shri Ramakrishna Kathâmrita*, the conversations of Shri Ramakrishna with his disciples, devotees, and visitors recorded by Mahendranath Gupta, who wrote the book under the pseudonym of 'M'. The conversations in Bengali fill five volumes. 'M', one of the disciples of the Master, was present during all the conversations recorded in the body of the book, and noted them down in his diary. They, therefore, have the value of almost stenographic records.

The translator, Swami Nikhilananda, is the head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York. He has chronologically arranged the matter of the Bengali volumes. The translation is literal, and omits only a few pages of no particular interest to the general public. The translator is conscious of his handicaps, and remarks: 'No translation can do full justice to the original. This difficulty is all the more felt in the present work, whose contents are of deep mystical nature and describe the inner experiences of a great seer.' None the less, the readers of the *Prabuddha Bharata* are already familiar with this excellent and faithful rendering, since portions of the translation were published in its pages during the past two years. The volume has been highly appreciated by such master minds—both Eastern and Western—as Aldous Huxley, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, W. E. Hocking, H. R. Zimmer, John Haynes Holmes, and others.

The American edition of the book was published from New York some time ago, and it is a matter of real pleasure that the Shri Ramakrishna Math of Madras has now brought out this sumptuous Indian edition. The volume removes a long-felt want and cannot but be a welcome addition to every home and public library.

CITIZEN TOM PAINE. BY HOWARD FAST. *Pp. 108. Price Rs. 3.*

THE DREAM OF RAVAN. (ANONYMOUS). *Pp. 149. Price Rs. 2-8. Both published by the International Book House, Ltd., Bombay.*

The life story narrated in the pages of the first of the above two volumes is as adventurous as it is interesting. Thomas Paine, the British corset-maker, leaves the shores of England, after the death of his wife, for the New World to seek his fortune, and reaches Pennsylvania where he turns a writer. His first book *Common Sense* brings him into limelight, and earns for him public recognition. Continuing the thread of the narrative, the author relates vividly the part played by Paine in successfully guiding the American leaders through their war of independence. In the second part of the book we find Paine in France, in the thick of the French Revolution, setting forth his

bold views in his famous book *The Rights of Man.* The blood-bath of revolution and the terror of mass executions give Paine a rude shock, and he grows sick of the world. And the utter faithlessness in God that he finds among those around him prompts him to write his third book *The Age of Reason,* in which he indicts all organized religions and their articles of faith, calling upon the followers to be more sincere and frank in their professions. Paine is arrested by the French leaders and later released. He grows unpopular both in England and France. Insults are heaped upon him, and he slowly passes out of the public life of France. Finding no other country welcome, he returns to the United States, aged in years and broken in spirit. Americans, too, refuse to accept this 'blasphemer' as a 'citizen', little knowing it is Thomas Paine, the great revolutionist that had worked for them.

'What Paine fought for in America and France and England in the eighteenth century we have still to fight for now,' says G. D. H. Cole. The printing and get-up of the book are excellent and the publishers have appended some letters and extracts relevant to the narrative.

The Dream of Ravan, as the sub-title suggests, is a mystery allegory from the *Râmâyana,* reprinted in these pages from *The Dublin University Magazine* in which it appeared nearly ninety years ago. The author's name is not disclosed, but his psychological interpretation of the Dream is deeply tinged with the occult and the mysterious.

THE NIGHT IS HEAVY. BY KRISHAN SHUNGLOO. *Published by Free India Publications, Lahore.*

THE IVORY TOWER. BY S. R. DONGERKERY. *Published by East and West Book House, Baroda.*

Here are two books of verse by Indians, but such as arouse opposite reactions. Mr. Dongerkery's primary occupation is an executive one, and the volume before us is a product of his leisure moments. Hence its title—*The Ivory Tower.* No gesture of protest is intended here against the progressives who would at least lean to, if not stand level with, ordinary mortals. From all that appears from this volume, no rumour of such a movement has reached Mr. Dongerkery's ears. For him poetry is still something ornamental, an additional feather in your cap. And so be it that it sounds sweet and lovely, with plenty of 'maidens fair' thrown in, it does not matter what you say or how you rhyme, it will be good enough for poetry. All one can say is, so much the worse for poetry!

It is a temperament of a very different order that is reflected in Mr. Krishan Shungloo's *The Night is Heavy.* One's first impression is that here is someone anxious to line up with the ultra-moderns. There are no stops ; capitals are dropped. Closer acquaintance brings into view a mind saturated with the modern poets. A phrase, a turn of expression, an echo of thought—these indicate a certain derivativeness in his inspiration. An almost astonishing affinity in temperament and preoccupations with the modern English poets, especially Eliot and Auden and Cummings, arouses suspicion. But at the end one is left with the impression that the author's individuality survives all.

The themes of the poems included in this volume are sufficiently various. There is a romantic lyric like 'we watched the moon together' on the one hand ; and a political manifesto 'let us admit this is our camp, our class' on the other. The total impression is of a sensibility touching life at many points but always retaining a certain uniqueness of reaction. The imagery is distinguished by a restrained and delicate sensitiveness.

For an example of a poem in which thought-emotion creates its own rhythm as it unfolds, we can quote, 'death the inevitable', and in almost every poem one can mark the sensitive accumulation of details.

Yet, in spite of so much talent and so much accomplishment, one hesitates before claiming much promise for the poet of this volume. He is much too derivative, much too finished, much too subjective in spite of the 'active protest' he would advocate, to allow for any considerable development. However, that should not take away from his positive achievement, contained in this volume.

S. K. NARAYAN

THE PHILOSOPHY OF VISHISHTÂDVAITA. BY RAO SAHIB P. N. SRINIVASACHARIAR, M.A. *Published by The Adyar Library, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 642. Price Rs. 10.*

This is a monumental work to which many students of Vishishtâdvaitic thought and religion have been eagerly looking forward. We have, no doubt, a long list of works on Shri Ramanuja by scholars of repute. Prof. V. K. Ramanujachariar, Dr. Bhandarkar, Govindacharya Swami, and Dr. De have published valuable treatises on Vaishnava religion and philosophy. Recently Prof. R. Ramanujachariar of the University at Chidambaram has rendered yeoman's service to philosophy by publish-

ing critically edited texts (with commentaries) of many Vishishtâdvaitic works hitherto but little known to the public. But, Prof. Srinivasachariar's work is the first comprehensive, systematic, and critical work in English on the philosophy of Vishishtâdvaita, and it comes from the pen of one who is deeply versed in Eastern and Western philosophy.

'The study of Vishishtâdvaita is of absorbing interest to all thinkers not only on account of its intrinsic value, but also on account of its *synthetic insight as a philosophy of religion*. . . . It has a universal appeal to humanity because it recognizes the immanence of God in all beings, and the innate spirituality and salvability of all *jivas* . . . and exalts the value and destiny of the individual.'

'The study of Vishishtâdvaita will be found to have immense value even to the Western thinker who is deeply interested in philosophy . . . . it co-ordinates thought or theoretic reason, will or morality, and feeling or aesthetics, synthesizes the values of truth, beauty, and goodness and harmonizes all contradictions. . . . Vishishtâdvaita is a synoptic philosophy *par excellence*.'

It is in these striking words that the author presents the framework of his treatise. True to the spirit of this introduction the chapters in the body of the work deal with the epistemology, ontology, cosmology, psychology, theology, and ethics of Vishishtâdvaita, bringing out the synthetic insight of the system. On the epistemological side there is a clear exposition of the nature of perception, of judgement, and relation, and of truth and error. Finally, the defects of the monistic theory of *avidyâ*, and the superiority of Shri Ramanuja's theory are explained clearly. The six chapters dealing with ontology are a substantial contribution to *Vedântic* metaphysics. The aesthetic conception of Brahman as *Bhuvana Sundara* is remarkable for its interpretation of *shringâra rasa* in its spiritual aspect. Another important contribution of this section is the demonstration that 'Vishishtâdvaita is not to be misconstrued as the adjectival theory of the absolute. . . . The finite self has not only an adjectival, but also a substantive mode of being.' This consideration naturally leads on to the psychology of the self (ch. xi), to *yoga* (chs. xiii, xiv, xv) and to the supreme problem of salvation (chs. xii, xvi, xix). The psychology of the *jiva* moves, of course, on the high moral and religious (or if we may say so, the supra-conscious) level. And the conception of *prapatti* as the supreme means of salvation and, the gift *par excellence* of Vaishnava religion, receives illuminating treatment at the hands of the learned author. The critical reader will undoubtedly look here for a comparative estimate of the Christian and Hindu conceptions of *mukti* : nor will he be disappointed. The problem is discussed and the conclusion is contained in the striking sentence, 'while in Christianity judgement follows redemption, in Shri Vaishnavism justice is overpowered by redemptive love.' Love transcends everything, and love is the very heart and core of Shri Vaishnavism. The spirit of the great *shloka* in the Gita,

Sarvadharmân parityajya mâmekam sharanam vraja
Aham tvâ sarvapâpebhyo mokshayishyâmi mâ shuchah.

which prescribes the supreme Vaishnava condition for salvation, is brought out very well by the author.

The book under review contains chapters dealing with the history of Vishishtâdvaitic Vaishnavism and the influence of Shri Ramanuja on other systems (chs. xx, xxi). The concluding chapter (xxii) gathers up the threads of the various arguments developed in the preceding chapters into a single synthetic whole, and gives us also a critical estimate of Vishishtâdvaita. A very useful glossary and an exhaustive index at the end add to the value of the excellent treatise. The get-up of the book is good, and the type-face is clear and pleasing. The publishers deserve our thanks for bestowing so much care on the valuable work. Prof. Srinivasachariar is a teacher of philosophy of long standing and repute. The book under review is the ripe fruit of his mellowed wisdom, scholarly research, and, above all, of his selfless labour in the cause of Indian philosophy. We strongly recommend the masterly work to the lay Hindu public, to all students of philosophy, and, in particular, to research workers in comparative religion and philosophy.

P. S. Naidu

SANSKRIT-ENGLISH

VÂDAVALI. Edited with an English Translation by P. Nagaraja Rao. *Published by The Adyar Library, Adyar, Madras. Pp. xxxii+224. Price Rs. 4.*

The *Vâdâvali* of Jayatirtha, the well-known commentator of Shri Madhva's works, is a polemical tract of the Dvaita school that criticizes the Advaita doctrine of *mâyâ*. The book is otherwise called *Vâdamâlâ*. The arguments of this book summarize some of the *prakaranas* of Madhva of whom the writer was a disciple. Jayatirtha is also credited with having placed the Dvaita system on a sound philosophical basis. It is doubtful if without his commentaries Madhva's system

would ever attain the distinction it now enjoys. The *Vâdâvali* was the starting point and basis of many other polemical tracts of the post-Madhva period, of which the *Nyâyâmrita* of Vyasaraya was felt as a serious challenge by the stalwarts of the Advaita school. It was to refute the dialectics of these polemical writers headed by Jayatirtha that such works as *Advaita-siddhi, Advaitamukura,* and *Bhedadhikkâra,* etc., came into existence.

Such being the eminence of Jayatirtha, it is but meet and proper that his works should be available in English translation. P. Nagaraja Rao has rendered a great service by accomplishing this none very easy task with commendable success. The value of the book has been greatly heightened by its association with two great scholars—the late Mr. Suryanarayana Sastri under whose guidance and supervision the volume was prepared and Dr. C. Kunhan Raja who has written a foreword and seen the book through the press.

The book is neatly printed and the get-up is excellent.

HINDI

BHAKTI YOGA. By Swami Vivekananda. Translated by Prof. V. B. Shukla, M.Sc., Ph.D., P.E.S., Sahitya-shastri. *Published by Swami Bhaskareshwarananda, President, Shri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur. Pp. 123. Price Annas Fourteen.*

Bhakti Yoga is one of the most important works of Swami Vivekananda, wherein he has critically analysed different forms of devotion, as also the different *sâdhanâs* that lead to the attainment of the final goal. After defining Bhakti as 'a real genuine search after the Lord, a search beginning, continuing, and ending in love', Swamiji has proceeded to deal with such significant topics as, *Philosophy of Ishvara, The need of a Guru, Incarnate Teachers and Incarnation, The Mantras,* and others that are closely associated with the path of devotion. In his inimitable, forceful style, Swamiji has clearly pointed out the naturalness of Bhakti Yoga and its central secret, thus bringing home to the readers the lofty truth that highest love and highest knowledge are one and the same to the true lover. Sahitya-shastri Dr. V. B. Shukla has rendered a very valuable service to the Hindi-knowing public by translating this important book, and he has been singularly successful in maintaining the spirit and the flow of the original, which is the unique feature of this translation.

There is no doubt that the Hindi-knowing public will gladly welcome and immensely like this valuable new addition to their library.

GITA DARPAN. By Swami Atmananda Muni. *Published by Shri Yogashrama, C/o. Sjt. Ambalal Chhotalal Patel, Dehgram, via Ahmedabad. Pp. 990. Price Rs. 2-8.*

The book consists of two parts. The first part, in which the author's originality comes out very strikingly, deals with the basic doctrines of Sankhya and Yoga. In the second part are the *shlokas* of the Gita followed by the author's elucidations. After each chapter there is a *résumé* of the main topics. Furthermore, the author, with judicious care picks up the main themes and weaves them into a beautiful pattern. All the main philosophical terms receive careful consideration and exposition.

The Gita epitomizes the essentials of Hinduism. As such, it should be studied from all possible points of view. We, therefore, welcome this volume heartily, though we do not agree fully with its author. The Sanskrit commentaries are too often beyond the intellectual ken of the masses. This Hindi exposition is calculated to reach a wider public.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1943

Another year has passed since we last met here. It was a year of still more formidable difficulties than the previous one, brought on by the appalling food shortage in the country, particularly in Bengal and Orissa. In addition to our permanent activities, we had to cope with this new calamity as well as with the after-effects of the terrible cyclone of 1942 in Midnapore. As you may imagine, our limited man-power was put to the highest strain. But through the grace of the Lord, and the exceedingly generous co-operation of the public throughout India and even abroad, the Mission was able to rise equal to the occasion. I shall now give you a very short account of the work of the Mission during the year 1943, which, as you will find, shows a general progress all round.

Members

During the year 10 lay members and 7 monastic members were enrolled, and 10 members passed away. At the end of 1943

there were 526 members (of whom 233 were lay and 293 monastic members). The names of those members who passed away are as follows: (1) Swami Srivasananda, (2) Swami Nityananda, (3) Swami Srishananda, (4) Swami Satyeshananda, (5) Dr. J. N. Majumdar, (6) Sister Saraswati, (7) Sj. Sarat Chandra Mukherjee, (8) Sj. Annada Prasad Basu, (9) Sj. Binode Behari Das Gupta, and (10) Sj. Narayan Chandra Rudra.

Mission Centres

Including the Headquarters there were 66 Mission centres, to which were added the Calicut and Pathuriaghata Branches, so that at the end of 1943 there were 68 Mission centres. Including the 64 Math centres in India and abroad working in close collaboration with the Mission, there are at present 132 centres, besides 11 sub-centres working under the guidance of the main centres.

Work: Permanent and Temporary

The above centres and sub-centres conducted no less than 361 permanent activities of various types, of which 283 belonged to the Mission. Besides, the Mission undertook in 1943 different types of Relief work, some of them of huge proportions.

The Headquarters

Besides guiding, controlling and supervising the various activities of the branch centres and supplying monastic workers to them, the Headquarters carried on the following activities of its own.

The *Charitable Dispensary, Belur,* treated 40,348 cases (of which 36,636 were new cases). Some of these patients were also supplied with diet.

Regular and *occasional* help was given to 38 students and 229 helpless widows and invalids.

The *Mass Education Fund* helped with monthly grants 4 schools with a total strength of 180.

Many monks from the Headquarters went all over India in *preaching tours* and held regular religious classes in and around Calcutta. The response everywhere was heartening.

Branch Centres

The different kinds of work carried on by the branch centres can be broadly classified under the following heads:—(1) Medical service, (2) Help to the poor, (3) Work among women, (4) Service to backward classes and areas, (5) Education and (6) Spread of culture and spiritual ideas. We shall take up these items in order.

(1) Medical Service

The branches at Benares, Kankhal, Brindavan, Taki, Midnapore, and Tamluk have each been maintaining a hospital. The total number of beds for general diseases in these hospitals was 324, and the total number of maternity beds at the Sisumangal Pratishthan and the Taki Shivananda Hospital was 139, so that there were altogether 463 beds in 1943, as against 424 beds in 1942. These centres treated altogether 7,743 indoor cases during the year, as against 6,182 in 1942. Of these 1,161 were surgical cases.

The Brindavan Sevashrama opened in May a new ward in which an Eye Hospital was started in September. It has proved a boon to the surrounding locality.

Outdoor Dispensaries

There were 48 outdoor dispensaries spread all over India. They adopted Homoeopathic, Ayurvedic and Allopathic systems of treatment according to local conditions. We mention a few with their average daily attendance: Benares 768, Lucknow 255, Bankura 236, Cawnpore 202, Brindavan 162, Bombay 159, Calicut 154, Malda 119, Midnapore 114, Belur 112, Katihar 99, Salem 98, Salkia 97, and Allahabad 95.

Mention should also be made of the T. B Clinic at Delhi, which treated 18,804 cases in 1943. With the installation of the X'Ray apparatus, the number of patients attending the clinic has considerably increased. The 'Home Treatment Scheme' started by the clinic in 1942 was successfully continued this year. Owing to the war situation the construction work of the Tuberculosis Sanatorium Hospital at Dungri, Ranchi, could make no further progress.

The Karachi branch opened an Eye Clinic in October, and the Lahore Ashrama a Homoeopathic Dispensary in December.

The outdoor dispensaries of the Mission treated 13,77,858 cases in all as against 12,71,271 in 1942, the daily average being 3,754 as against 3,440 in 1942.

(2) Help to the Poor

In addition to their normal duties, the centres were always ready to lend a helping hand to poor and needy people. Thus 75 patients were served in their homes, about 596 mds. of rice were doled out, and 4,454 cloths and blankets were distributed. Besides, a sum of Rs. 17,727-7-6 was spent for occasional and regular help to 2,825 persons.

(3) Work among Women

The Mission has always been conscious of its duty to the womanhood of India. Typical of the work done in this direction

are the Women's Department of the Benares Sevashrama, the Sisumangal Pratishthan for expectant mothers in Calcutta, the Maternity work at Jalpaiguri and Taki, the Widows' Homes at Puri and Benares, the Sarada Vidyalaya at Madras, the Sister Nivedita Girls' School in Calcutta and the Sarada Sikshamandira at Sarisha (24-Parganas). Besides, there are special arrangements for women in most of the hospitals and dispensaries, and some primary schools are particularly conducted for them.

The Sarada Mandira or hostel attached to the Nivedita Girls' School, Calcutta, remained closed owing to the emergency conditions.

(4) Uplift of Backward Classes and Areas

The Mission has been trying its utmost to serve those classes and areas which lag behind in education and culture. The Ashramas in Khasia and Jaintia Hills and in villages like Taki, Sarisha, Sonargaon, Baliati, Jayrambati and Sargachhi, and various other rural institutions organized by almost all the urban centres bear ample evidence of the Mission's solicitude for the masses. Some of these centres organized tours with magic lanterns, gramophones, etc. The labouring classes in industrial areas had free access to the Charitable Dispensaries and Hospitals as well as to the Primary and Night Schools, some of which were specially conducted for them.

(5) Educational Work

The educational work of the Mission can be divided under five heads: (1) College Education, (2) Secondary Schools, (3) Primary and Night Schools, (4) Industrial and Vocational Schools and (5) Students' Homes (Hostels).

College Education

The Vidyamandira, Belur, the only residential college of the Mission, was ably run by the Sarada Pitha despite the prevailing turmoil. Of the first batch of 19 students sent up for the I.A. Examination, 10 passed in the 1st division, and 6 in the 2nd division, and one of them stood 10th in order of merit. It has provided an excellent hostel for the college boys, where their academical education was supplemented by special classes and extra-mural activities. Land measuring seven acres, lying between the Vidyamandira and the Grand Trunk Road, was acquired in the early part of the year, on which the Workshop and Administrative Block as also two hostel buildings for the Shilpamandira (Technicians' Section) of the Sarada Pitha were erected. The section was transferred to its new premises from the college building in the last week of December. The total number of electricians, fitters and carpenters undergoing training at the Shilpamandira at the end of the year was 250.

A similar section was successfully conducted by the Madras Students' Home at its workshops at Mylapore and Tyagarayanagar, number of electricians, fitters, mechanists and turners trained here being 303.

Secondary Schools

The Mission conducted two types of High Schools, viz, Residential and Day-schools. Of the Residential Schools, that at Deoghar had 150 students (additional 10 students attending as day scholars), the Madras Students' Home had 166, the Perianaickenpalayam Vidyalaya (Coimbatore) 147 and the Shivananda Vidyalaya, Batticaloa (Ceylon) had 146. Of the Day-schools, that in Tyagarayanagar, Madras, with its total of 2,170 boys and 154 girls is by far the biggest in the Mission; the next place is occupied by the Sarada Vidyalaya, Madras, with a strength of 1,077 girls and 78 boys; and when all the units under the Madras Students' Home are taken into consideration, the centre can easily rank with the best and biggest educational institutions of its own grade in India. Mention should also be made of the 12 Secondary Schools in Ceylon, which had a total strength of 1,769 students. The Shivananda Vidyalaya, Batticaloa, opened its Chemical Laboratory and Library buildings in October. The Mission conducted altogether 21 Secondary Schools and 14 M. E. Schools, with a total of 5,808 boys and 2,889 girls.

Primary and Night Schools

Under the Mission there were 57 Primary Schools with 2,126 boys and 1,333 girls, and 15 Night Schools with 471 students. The Sylhet centre had the distinction of conducting the largest number of Primary and Night Schools, their total strength being 445.

Industrial and Vocational Schools

There were Industrial Schools at Madras, Sylhet, Taki and Belur, which had 60, 67, 47, and 16 students on their rolls respectively. The Madras Industrial School specializes in automobile engineering. It also gives vocational education to all students of the Residential School. Agricultural education was provided at the Sarisha and Mansadwip centres, the former of which ably conducted distress relief work during the year. Many other schools organized vocational education of some sort or other. The Bankura Sevashrama has a

section for training Homoeopathic students. The Sarada Vidyalaya of Madras and the Sarada Sikshamandira of Sarisha have each a training section for lady teachers of elementary schools.

Students' Homes

During the year under review 38 centres accommodated 1,208 students of different schools and colleges. This type of activity was often combined with other kinds of work. But in some centres, as in the Residential College and Schools and in the Students' Homes in Calcutta and Madras, as also in the Barnagore Ashrama, this was the principal activity. In all these places, the boys were given every facility for study and for developing their health and character. In the middle of the year a new Home for students and orphans with its own three-storied building and an endowment for its upkeep, was started at Pathuriaghata, Calcutta. A temporary Civil Hostel for war technicians was opened by the Madras branch in October. The Calcutta Students' Home has maintained its reputation for efficiently training college students.

SPREAD OF CULTURE AND SPIRITUAL IDEAS

For the spread of culture and spiritual ideas, almost all centres conducted Libraries and Reading Rooms and organized public lectures and classes. The Karachi and Salem centres opened library buildings in May and September respectively. The Karachi Ashrama is very successfully conducting a Sunday religious class, which is attended by over 1,500 persons. The Mission's monastic workers made contacts with distinguished scholars of foreign lands and carried the universal message of Vedanta to distant shores.

The Institute of Culture, Calcutta, organized 42 classes and 12 lectures by distinguished persons during the year.

FOREIGN WORK

The foreign work of the Mission was carried on almost normally. The first anniversary of the Charitable Dispensary of the Mauritius centre was celebrated in August under the presidency of H. E. the Governor. We had no news last year of our monastic workers at the Singapore centre. The Burma work remained suspended.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

It is gratifying to note that in spite of the war situation our general income has increased. But the expenses have also gone up.

The total receipts during the year were Rs. 21,12,386-0-3 and the total expenditure Rs. 20,60,031-4-11, the corresponding figures for 1942 being Rs. 18,19,757-11-3 and Rs. 16,82,475-7-2 respectively.

CONCLUSION

I thank you all for your hearty co-operation in our strenuous work. I also thank those absent friends and sympathizers of our cause but for whose active help in diverse forms the Mission would not have achieved the success it has done against such heavy odds as the last year presented. But we have not yet turned the corner. Nay, more critical days seem to lie in front of us, and we should be ready to meet whatever emergency may arise, through economic or other causes. Let us not be puffed up by our past success.

Rather let us be conscious of the shortcomings and try to avoid them in future. Ours is to work, leaving the results to the Lord. If we but do our part well, Shri Ramakrishna is sure to send us all necessary help. Do we not see his benign hand behind our last year's work? Let us have firm faith in his guidance, and with sincerity, mutual helpfulness and singleness of purpose let us put forth the best that is in us, so that we may forge ahead towards the common goal of Liberation, through the path of renunciation and service chalked out by our great Leader, Srimat Swami Vivekananda.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX — *JUNE, 1944* — No. 6



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.'

THE PATH OF SELF-SURRENDER

By Swami Turiyananda

Faith in God is the real thing. I am glad to know that you liked what I wrote about the essence of the teachings of the Gita. The sense of the verse: 'Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, . . .' etc., is exactly as you have written. To look upon oneself as the machine and Him as the mechanic, is one attitude. There are other attitudes too. For example, He has become everything, and dwelling within all He Himself is playing all these games—this is another. Similarly there are many other attitudes. But the absence of this petty egoistic feeling is necessary in all the attitudes. Know this petty ego to be the root of all evil and delusion.

Taking refuge in Him means just this: to try to be content, however He may place you, viewing it as good; to merge one's will in the will of God, and to practise equanimity in happiness and misery, gain and loss, etc. That is to say, one can rightly take refuge in Him only when one becomes free. Before that it is the Yoga of practice. Perfect resignation of self to God is liberation. If one is honest in the practise of this attitude, it is sure to come some day through His grace. About renunciation, of which you have written, the Master used to say, 'At first the daughter-in-law has to do a lot of tiresome work in the house; but when she is with child, the mother-in-law gradually cuts down her work and does not allow her to toil so much. Afterwards when she gives birth to the child, there is no more work for her at all. Her sole work consists of being occupied with the baby, looking after it and finding joy in its delight.'

To wait in patience for His mercy as a beggar waits for alms, is also another attitude; if it is sincere, His mercy is sure to descend. The Master used to call it the attitude of the kitten which stays wherever and however the mother chooses to place it; it has no desire, no

effort of its own. In short, success is sure if any attitude whatever is sincerely followed. He is the inner ruler—He knows everything; our attainments are bound to be in accordance with our cravings.

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

By the Editor

I

We glibly talk of racial perfections and shortcomings, and eulogize or malign the different races on the face of the earth according to the varying moods we are in, little thinking that our premises may be fundamentally wrong. The harm done by such biassed or prejudiced propaganda is assuming greater and still greater proportion, till thinking people despair of the harmonious development of the human family.

The present war, like all wars of old, has roused emotion to the highest pitch and encircled this sentimental bias with a strange halo of verisimilitude. The mass mind has been worked to white heat, so that the least opposition runs the risk of being speedily scorched and blasted. National Governments, too, have added not a little to this strange attitude through their propaganda machines. Thus we are asked to believe that certain races are inherently cruel and barbarous and wreckers of cultural values like bulls in china shops; certain others are impermeable to democratic ways of thinking and incapable of administrative efficiency like babies and disorganized mobs; while still others are so far below the standard of civilization that they should better be classed with subhuman species of animals. The simple fact that most of these races have, one time or other, given birth to great souls who have helped humanity on the path of perfection, is totally forgotten. They swear by the theory of evolution, and yet they hardly recognise that the so-called backward races have an infinite future before them replete with inexhaustible possibilities of progress. They refuse to see that the present scales of values are highly artificial, and the present scheme of opportunities and inducements for progress are jealously guarded and devilishly monopolized. In fact, the present civilization does not look at man from the point of view of his intrinsic worth, but thinks of him *en masse* as one of a strange conglomeration of dream-world phantasies. And the background of this fantastic picture is supplied by organized selfishness, short-sightedness, and prejudice which go by the name of nationalism.

Of these whimsical segmentations of the human society we have two very broad and well-known divisions—the East and the West. And Kipling's dictum that the East is East and the West is West and the two shall never meet, though it has become trite, still boldly underlines a real state of human mind. Many Westerners keep that idea hidden in their subconscious mind, and many Easterners betray it in their conscious moods and attitudes. There is a third division, that of the Niggers and the aborigines who are subhuman for all intents and purposes both to the Eastern and the Western minds. There are other racial groups which have gathered round them intense sentimental reactions. The Huns are undoubtedly barbarous and subverters of culture; and the Japs are intruders in the civilized world, their thin integument of culture hardly covers their rough and brutish minds. Such are some of the working generalizations that most people keep in their pockets for ready application.

It will be silly and useless to blame any one nation for this slur on humanity. We have one and all contributed to this strange phenomenon. For oppression continues only so long as there are submissive human beings and so long as these latter are not brought to bay. Such being the laws of social actions and reactions, there would have been no supercilious ruling race if there were not groups of supine human beings: there would have been no racial snobbery if there was no culture-lag anywhere; there would have been no inter-racial black-mailing if there was no racial monopoly of the world's wealth: and there would have been no cruel retaliation if there was no carefully hatched racial hatred. But unwittingly we have entered the domain of hasty generalization that we set out to condemn! Let us now turn to some concrete illustrations of racial prejudice.

Kipling's mistake lay in accepting a temporary phenomenon as a permanent feature of human relationship. But Maeterlinck raised this to the psychological plane when he asserted 'that the East and the West are altogether impermeable to each other, or that there exist in the human brain an Oriental and an Occidental division which mutually paralyse their efforts'. The question of *rapprochement* was, therefore, ruled out of court. But when Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, and others were highly eulogized by their Western admirers like Romain Rolland who maintained that the Orient had a message of its own which the West would profit by taking timely note of, some Western thinkers scented a danger of Eastern contamination. Henri Massis gave utterance to this in the most emphatic way:

It is in the West that one must first look for and denounce the ideologists who—while pretending to open our eyes to Oriental ideas—betray Occidental civilization and their own proper vocation. On the other hand, when we consider who are their allies in Asia, among the Orientals themselves, we observe that they all have been formed by Western culture. Tagore, Okakura, Coomaraswamy, even Gandhi himself, all of them have been educated in European universities; they quote unceasingly our poets, our philosophers, and it is our own ideas—meaning thereby our own follies—which they give back to us. How does it happen that under the pretext of coming to an understanding, a union between the East and the West, their thought by a kind of pre-established harmony, is in agreement with what is most destructive in European ideology? It is obvious that they utilize the breaches and search for the line of least resistance in order to penetrate into the body of the disintegrating West?

But Romain Rolland could present not only Tagore and Gandhi but also Shri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda who were not the products of Western culture, who did not quote Western poets and savants, and who could not be accused of entering the Western world through the backdoor. Their's was a message universal, coeval with humanity, nay, Divinity, unlimited by climatic limitations and racial prejudices, and yet derived from the hoary past of the Orient. The West could not but take note of this and ask in its confusion, Is the East so really strange as our thinkers would have us believe? Are its values so far low in the scale of human estimation as not to merit any consideration? Shri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda are a challenge to the modern, superficial intellect and still more vapoury spiritual consciousness, for they represent the Vedantic ideal of the potential equality and Divinity of all races and individuals.

II

Prejudice, however, dies hard. Reason and facts pale into insignificance in the face of self-interested drives. Besides, the West has the whip-hand and can easily ignore the cry of the so-called backward races for fairer treatment. The Whites can requisition at will history, science, sociology, and metaphysics (which are their own creations) to justify the present state of things. As Stoddard writes:

Out of the prehistoric shadows the white races pressed to the front and proved in a myriad ways their fitness for the hegemony of mankind. Gradually they forged a com-

mon civilization; then, when vouchsafed their unique opportunity of oceanic mastery four centuries ago, they spread over the earth filling its empty spaces with their superior breeds and assuring to themselves an unparalleled paramountcy of number and dominion.

It may, therefore, be taken for granted for the time-being that evolution has decided in favour of the Whites. The coloured people have to bide their time till the evolutionary circle takes another turn, if it does at all, in the distant future. But things assume an ugly appearance when white races try to make a distinction among themselves and the solution is sought to be made at the point of the bayonet. During the last World War, Germany claimed certain superiority on account of her Kultur, though she had to eat the humble pie. None the less, Hitler's Germany has again raised the false cry of racial purity and a *lebensraum* for the Germanic people, which must be attained even at the cost of others. According to German ideologists, Jews must be extradited or extirpated by thousands. Poles, with their inferior Kultur, can advance no counter-claim to equality of treatment. The French and the English must equally yield precedence to the Germanic race. The modern international struggle is interpreted in terms of money or power by superficial thinkers only. As Dr. Rosenberg puts it,

> The real fight today is not so much for the shifting of power in the outer world, but rather to rebuild the soul-structure of the Nordic nations, and to preserve the very substance of the race. The position of political power may for a long time continue to become even more unfavourable for us. If, however, a new and yet ancient Germanic type has been realized and created, it will become the focal point round which everything will gather which is still rooted in the old home-soil of Europe.

Hitler is equally emphatic on this race theory. His State is synonymous with the Nordic race, whatever that phrase may imply :

> The State is only a means to an end. Its end and its purpose is to preserve and promote a community of human beings who are physically as well as spiritually kindred. Above all, it must preserve the existence of the race, thereby providing the indispensable condition for the free development of all the forces dormant in this race. The State is only the vessel and the race is what it contains. The vessel can have a meaning only if it preserves and safeguards the contents. Otherwise it is worthless.

Not only this, the superiority of the Germanic race is a historic and natural fact :

> It was the Aryan alone who founded a superior type of humanity; therefore he represents the archetype of what we understand by the term Man.

From this it is but one step more to conclude that Germany must rule the world :

> Anyone who sincerely wishes that the pacifist idea should prevail in this world, ought to do all he is capable of doing to help the Germans conquer the world. . . .

It will be far from the truth to maintain from such quotations that all the Germans are imbued with the idea that they are the chosen people of God. There must be honest people who doubt or even deny such a flagrantly false theory, although their voice is ineffective at present and they are led along like dumb-driven cattle by their power-intoxicated and prejudice-ridden leaders. It will be equally wrong also to hold that though the Germans have stated this theory most blatantly and are working it out most tenaciously, there are not others among the European nations who publicly swear by this and privately work for it. We should not be understood here also as condemning whole groups. But we have to take note of the fact that there were and still are leaders of thought in other countries who believe in this theory of racial superiority and all that it implies. Bryce, for instance, wrote :

> What we must desire in the interests of mankind at large is that the most highly civilized races should increase faster than the more backward, so as to enable the former to prevail not merely by force, but by numbers and amicable influence.

In a debate in the South African Assembly on 11 April 1944 Mr. Abrahamson said 'that the position was im-

possible. They were seriously considering asking Government to segregate Europeans in their areas and to leave certain areas for Indians only. If only that was done, perhaps, white civilization in Natal could be saved.' (*Hindusthan Standard*, 13 April 1944).

And we hear responsible statesmen making appeals in the name of Anglo-Saxon solidarity, and adjuration for the putting down of Japanese brutality and Germanic cruelty. We hear that the Anglo-Saxon races will have to take upon themselves the responsibility of maintaining world peace, that the German Huns and Japanese barbarians will have to be unarmed, that the Slavonic people will have to be dealt with more carefully, that the Arabic people will have to be given more political power, and so on and so forth. People often speak of the present struggle as an ideological war. Be that as it may, the fact cannot be denied that it is a racial war as well. The only difference between the two opposing camps is as regards method—the one believes in an appeal to arms and mass massacre while the other stands for peaceful penetration and reduction of opposing races to imbecility.

III

The theory of intrinsic racial differences, though apparently based on so-called scientific data, is at bottom an attempt at justifying the rule of some races over others. It is advanced as a socio-philosophical background for the pretension of some groups to be recognized as natural world leaders. First comes distinction and then supremacy. The Germans are Aryans, *ergo*, the non-Aryans must be their under dogs. The Whites are distinct from the coloured peoples, therefore, the latter cannot claim equality with the former. The axiom underlying all such discussion is that there must be some one human group which is Divinely ordained to assume world leadership. Or in other words, the attempt at grading the different races resolves itself into a simple search for the chosen people, although no racial group has so far been able to advance that pretentious claim and successfully withstand the consequences. The Jews once claimed the distinction, but they are now scattered all over the world. The Chinese did it under their imperial dynasties, but they are now fighting for their national existence. The Greeks and the Romans did it in their palmy days, but they are now out of the running. The Whites claim it now for themselves, although Port Arthur was at once a shock and an eye-opener. But the last incident failed to materially alter the theory of White supremacy, though it ushered a new contestant in the arena. When the modern pupil of the West, we mean Japan, outbid Russia in her own game, she adopted the technique of propaganda of her masters and claimed racial superiority over others.

It was easy, however, to dismiss the pretensions of such an 'infant terrible,' and explain away the temporary success on various plausible grounds. It was easy to assert that the Japanese people did not triumph over any European Power as such, but only against Czarist Russia, which had a rotten administration and was virtually an Asiatic country. And during the present war, it is openly declared that Japan's claim is absolutely spurious, she being a freak of Nature and a sort of skeleton in the cupboard.

This easy-going self-complacence might go unchallenged but for two significant incidents during the last World War. Japan's success notwithstanding, the Whites might still guard their privileged position against the coloured races. But when Germany made a bid for world hegemony on the basis of cultural and racial supremacy, the race theory itself had to be stated afresh. Mere material power and possession could no longer be a sure criterion of superiority. Besides, Aryanism, which had so far held the field as the hall-mark of higher culture and mental calibre, had to be decried as a study-room invention. Thus H. B.

Hannah writes in his *Culture and Kultur Race-origins* :

> It is now generally agreed that there never was any Aryan Race, the common progenitor of all the subsequent races who spoke and speak the Indo-Aryan and Indo-European languages (p. 10). Prusso-Germans as an ethnos, and even so far as the recent indications show, individually, are possessed of no Character, no Spirituality, whatever. Intellect, of a sort, they undoubtedly have. . . . Nevertheless, they are utter barbarians. . . . Closely connected with this subject are the far-reaching and deep-laid plots on the part of 'Scientific' Teutonia to obtain a general acknowledgement that as individuals—physically, mentally, and even, ye gods! spiritually—the Prusso-Germans are the supermen of the Earth, and as a nation, are destined to universal hegemony and overlordship. Knowing full well that these first-mentioned honours already belong, as of right, to the Englishman (using that term in its widest sense), . . . (pp. 145-146).

According to the same author civilization, or rather the spiritual portion of it, travelled from the West to the East and not *vice versa* (p. 150). Thus Hannah, at one stroke, establishes not only the racial inferiority of the Easterners, but he also advances the claim of his Englishman to be recognized as the superman!

Secondly, if the last World War ended in an unaided victory for England, the victory would certainly have been requisitioned for supporting the old race theory, for was not superiority proved there demonstrably by force of arms? But a distracting factor was the participation of America whose men, money, and ammunition played a decisive part. We hear nowadays of the United States of America as an Anglo-Saxon country, though there is hardly any pure race on the earth now. In fact, there has been such a fusion of blood there, that the race theory in its old sense is hardly applicable. The English, the French, the Germans, the Italians, the Slavs, the Spaniards, the Negroes, and many other races have contributed their blood in the building up of the American nation. When, therefore, American superiority became apparent after the last War, a fresh explanation was called for. So H. W. Van Loon came with a more realistic outlook in his *The Story of Mankind* :

> I do not for a moment claim that, man for man and woman for woman, the Americans as a nation are superior to any of their cousins of the old world. But fortunately they have little consciousness of the past, and, therefore, they are more able to approach the problems of the present with an open eye towards the future than the members of almost any other race. As a result they have accepted the modern world without any reservations and having accepted it with all its good and all its evil, they are rapidly reaching a *modus vivendi* whereby animate man and his inanimate servant shall be able to exist on terms of peace and mutual respect. . . . In order to do this the American people have been forced to throw overboard a great deal of ancestral ballast. (p. 407).

The difficulties experienced so far with the race theory have been augmented by the present nameless, formless, and aimless armageddon which cuts across all racial and geographical frontiers. The Japanese are shaking hands with the Germans, and the Chinese, Russians, Indians, and Negroes have joined hands with the English and the Americans. When victory comes, the historian will hesitate to ascribe it to the racial worth of any particular group, though claimants for the honour there certainly will be.

IV

Such are some of the aspects of the race theory which have developed so far in the West. These have their counterparts in India as well. Caste is held by some to be a natural consequence of racial superiority and eagerness for maintaining racial purity. We have to say frankly, however, that whatever the early beginnings might have been, the plain fact is that there is little of pure blood in India at present. Races have intermarried and intermixed for centuries, so that it is almost silly now to talk of Aryans and Dravidians, whites and reds, blacks and browns, etc. In features and colours the people of one region differ so little from those of another, that when dressed alike, the foreigners can hardly distinguish among them. It is high

time, therefore, that we recognize facts and stop talking irresponsibly about these study-room races, thereby making confusion worse confounded. There is but one Indian nation. Local pride and interested propaganda, however, cannot take kindly to such a patent fact. As a consequence, others take advantage of this divergence to our utter chagrin. We fight for mythical names and imaginary fames ignoring the broad facts of history and everyday life while things more substantial slip through our fingers. For where are the Aryans and Dravidians of the scientific anthropologists, and where are the castes of the orthodox sociologists? As Swami Vivekananda pointed out:

> In India, more than anywhere, such words as Aryans and Dravidians, are only of philological import, the so-called craniological differentiation finding no solid ground to work upon. . . . Not one of the epithets expressive of contempt for the ugly physical features of the Dasyus of the Vedas would apply to the great Tamilian race; in fact if there be a toss for good looks between the Aryans and Tamilians, no sensible man would dare prognosticate the result. The sur-arrogated excellence of birth of any caste in India is only pure myth. . . . an ocean of humanity, composed of these race-waves seething, boiling, struggling, constantly changing form, rising to the surface, and spreading and swallowing little ones; again subsiding—this is the history of India.

Such being the case, the Swamiji entreated us to think of the Indian nation as a whole and be proud of our Tamilian, Kolarian, Hun, Scythian, Persian, Mongol, Tartar, and all other ancestors, who made India what it is, and whom he included under the single generic name, the 'Aryans', the people of India. In the Swamiji's view, therefore, the race theories had no practical significance, and in the fight for precedence and privilege he found the seed of disruption. This in India. In the world, too, as we have seen, race supremacy is at the root of most of the trouble. But we are not in this article primarily concerned with the West for the very cogent reason that the West can take care of itself. The race theory in the contemporary world works most disastrously against the East inasmuch as it not only justifies and perpetuates present inequities, it has also made inroads into the mental and spiritual life of the East, engendering a degrading belief in racial inferiority. To check further progress of this soul-killing ideology, we must effectively despoil our minds of some of the theories propounded by race propagandists. Let us take brief note of some of these.

V

What does the Oriental mentality, according to the Occident, actually consist in? The Orientals are unscientific, other-worldly, pessimistic, unprogressive, undemocratic, and culturally backward.

To at least one of the assumptions underlying all these charges, we plead guilty. The East does want to build its society on spirituality rather than on materialism. It is beyond the scope of this article to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the opposing points of view. But we do believe, from the bottom of our heart, that the spiritual standpoint does represent a higher outlook on life, and it is replete with more possibilities of progress than the rival one.

As for the other charges, we can only consider some of their worst implications. The race theories are nothing but wide generalizations based on insufficient data. For one thing, we must remember that it is extremely silly to condemn a whole race or a nation on the evidence of meagre literary, historical, or other evidences, for the simple reason that inductive logic demands a more thorough sifting of facts and testing of hypotheses. Be that as it may, if we follow the method of our calumniators, we may easily show that they themselves stand on no better ground.

The backwardness of Europe was too palpable a few centuries ago to require any special exposure. In Europe barbers were surgeons even in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century the magic touch of the king

was believed to have curative power. In England, so late as 1848, 32 p.c. of men and 49 p.c. of women were illiterate and had to sign their names on the marriage register with a cross. Alchemy had many votaries and the search for the philosopher's stone ceased only a few generations ago. Hospitals were unknown in Europe before the time of Emperor Constantine, though Ashoka founded them five hundred years earlier. Indian ships excelled those of Europe even in the fifteenth century. India is the original home of cotton. Indian art and architecture attained great perfection when it was little known in England, France, Germany, and other countries. In physical, chemical, mathematical, astronomical, and metallurgical sciences India attained a height which was beyond the conception of the contemporary West. In medicine and surgery India easily surpassed others. In warfare India was hardly behind other nations, and often led them. In colonization she was unrivalled in the East. In literature her achievement is still the wonder of the world. And in speculative thought she is still unsurpassed. In fact, India of old, was neither unusually unprogressive nor very unscientific. The same can be said of China as well. She, too, was in the vanguard of civilization, and modern nations owe much more to China than she does to them.

The East, again, was not more pessimistic and other-worldly than Europe. Calvin, for instance, wrote:

> If heaven is our country, what is earth but our place of exile? If to depart out of the world is to enter into life, what is the earth but a sepulchre? What is a continuance in it but absorption in death? We must learn to hate this terrestrial life, that it make us no prisoners to sin.

Schopenhauer's conception of the world as an evil thing is too well known to call for any special reference. He did not believe in progress, for he wrote:

> In general, the wise in all ages have always said the same things, and the fools, who at all times form the immense majority, have in their way too acted alike, and gone the opposite; and so it will continue. For as Voltaire says, we shall leave the world as foolish and wicked as we found it.

And look at this Byronic despair:

> Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
> Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
> And know, whatever thou hast been,
> 'Tis better something not to be.

Are the Indians undemocratic? Look at the republics India reared in the past. And even in later history the intelligentsia had a determining voice in the affairs of State and often, too, the masses revolted and made and unmade things. Besides, there were guilds and *panchâyats* for carrying on local affairs. In this connection we must remember that in the West democracy is still an ideal to be achieved, while there are many in every nation who openly decry it. Truth to say, modern European societies are mostly plutocracies and aristocracies. Besides, for administrative efficiency Europe of old had nothing comparable to the India of Ashoka, Harshavardhana, or Akbar.

Such are some of the charges and counter-charges. But the modern Westerner, while admitting all this, will argue that though the East was in an advantageous position in the past, the forces of evolution have now placed the best race on the top. The East has been left in the lurch by the natural forces of evolution, and it is no use now blaming the West. A greater prostitution of a biological theory is unimaginable! If the coloured races were really so deficient in brain, will, and physical strength, how can the Negroes make their intellectual weight felt in the U.S.A.? How can Indian scientists, writers, artists, and statesmen outbid the Whites? How can Japan imbibe all the Western culture in such a comparatively short period? How can Asiatic Russia be so speedily revolutionized? And how can China display such physical and moral stamina even in the face of Japanese onslaught?

Truth to say, the present war has stripped the race theory utterly naked

and exposed the worthlessness of the material with which is stuffed this colossal image to which all modern nations pay homage. A Moses was necessary to wean back the Jews from their idolatry. A prophet may not arise in these God-forsaken days to cure humanity of its idolatry of race superiority. But will not the sufferings of the War compel us to mend our ways? Religious men of old searched for the best religion, and the Parliament of Religions at Chicago put an end to that quest by showing that all religions are true. Modern politicians are clamouring for the chosen people. Will the future peace table give the quietus to this by demonstrating the need and worth of each and every nation for the progress of humanity? Vedanta believes in the Divinity of man. All can reach perfection provided there is adequate opportunity and self-exertion. Will future statecraft provide such opportunity and make the world richer, fairer, more worthy to live in?

DRAMA IN INDIA

By Pandit Taranath

Culture is the goal and centre of life. It is the organization of the whole being which has to react to an ordered environment called the world. This culture is, therefore, the urge of life, being the inevitable response to a stimuli of ordered creation. Once this is realized, pleasure is transformed into bliss, the ephemeral reveals the eternal in it, and the human becomes Divine. With the highest attainment possible, and the highest bliss available, the very nature of pleasure-loving in the human creates another urge, that of broadcasting the same consciously or unconsciously. It is the existence of such self-realized propagandists that accounts for the evolution of the race. It is such that make for the dawn of progress, as the West would call it. Therefore we in India concluded long ago that civilization means the spontaneous spread of the process of self-realization. The underlying principles of it, that go to form the philosophy of the people, are the direct result of intuitive realization and intellectual conviction.

But philosophy to propagate, must pragmatize itself into pedagogy, and the rock-bottom of pedagogy is the psychology of the taught. It is a well-known fact that the unknown can be learnt only with the aid of the known, or more technically speaking, that knowledge is the correlation of a novel objective to an existing cognate. That cognates are the impressions caused by the reaction of the inner being to the stimulus of the environment, is also admitted on all hands. These environments being different according to the very structure of the universe, different zones evoke different reactions, creating different impressions thereof. Though fundamentally human nature is the same in terms of pleasure and pain, the reactions to these differ in mode and expression. These vary with the several zones according to the geographical differences and their respective customs and conventions. The people of each zone, therefore, have their distinct characteristics which the Vedantins called *samashti* or 'group-consciousness'. No teaching can be perfectly assimilated unless it is in tune with this group-consciousness. And, besides, any teaching to fix itself must have a natural bearing on the *samskáras* (approximately, impressions) of the taught.

On an average, the feelings of pleasure and pain may be the same, if only the physical aspect is considered. But with man there is the mental aspect

too. And this mental response, or the way in which men are moved by circumstances, differs with *samashtis*. Superficially it may differ even with different individuals of the same *samashti* but not fundamentally so. Therefore if any teaching should be a success, it depends not only on the excellence of the lesson itself but also on the mind of the taught and the method of imparting too. But apart from these considerations, there is the important aspect of attraction. All beings are fond of pleasure and no system of education, therefore, that does not incorporate pleasantness with it, can spread well. *There can be no instruction without interest and attraction.*

The ancients never stopped with regarding culture as conviction. They defined that as 'a process of becoming' through the character of the individual and the custom of the people. To them it was never the pointed pinnacle of a stray temple but the broad base of society. Its place of discovery might be in solitude but its field of play was always society. The discoveries in the cave were to be the conduct of the community. The intellectual convictions of the few were to be the character of the many. Aspirations were meant only to make aspirants after Truth.

Mere drawing-room manners cannot be called culture. They are but acted poses of others' realizations and never the expressions of a knowing and feeling heart. And what use is ruminating others' cuds or is it even possible? Culture to the ancients meant real conversion—the lower becoming the higher. It meant the great work of leading the beast and the bigot to a state of beatitude: and that was no easy task. But the Rishis were of no ordinary mettle to fight shy of it. With the eye fixed on eternity and the hand of blessing on humanity, they rose equal to the task of evolving the *vyashti* (individual), through *samashti* to *mukti* (beatitude). To this end the Vedas were written: the Upanishads, the Âranyakas, the Dharma-sutras, and the Purânas, too, came into existence only that the Light of Eternity may shine in the ephemeral as well. They were the outcome of the experiences of ages and sages, who before the majesty of knowledge discovered the littleness of their own realizations; who humbly before the stupendousness of *jnâna* (knowledge), regarded even their vastness and sublimity of realization as but an impetus to further research. Metaphysics, philosophy, and psychology—and that mostly introspective—one and all methods of analysis, and Vedanta of synthesis were used for the purpose of broadcasting the fundamentals and the methods of realizing them. *And drama, too, was conceived as but a method of imparting knowledge to the people.* It was not meant to excite but to educate, not to entice but to elevate; in a word *drama was evolved to transmute man to God.*

To spread the culture of the race based on eternal verities in a manner interesting and elevating, needed the vision of the seers, the analysis of the philosophers, and the sweetness of the poets and artists. The Indian drama, characteristic of all these, is, therefore, rightly called *triveni sangama*—a confluence of the three rivers of vision, philosophy, and symbolic art. Drama as such is not meant to be merely amusing: it is that which uses amusement to reveal verities. It has neither the flippancy of an empty joke nor the seriousness of philosophy. If the verities of life can be so well embodied in words as to picture in the mind of the hearer the life of the world as it is and as it ought to be, there then is a feat of the artist. Such feats are not dreams of mere rhetoric, but were actually realized by seers like Vyasa and Valmiki. But when times changed it needed the introduction of what are called *drishya kâvya*, meaning 'visible poetry', i.e., drama.

What should be the fundamentals of this great art then? The answer is not far to seek, when the function of the

drama is to epitomize not only the world of actualities but also of the verities behind that govern them visibly or invisibly. According to Hindu philosophy, the whole of creation is a dual throng, *dvandva*. Pleasure and pain are not independent and isolate. They are but the obverse and the reverse of the Truth yet unrealized: and to see that Truth embosomed by these, which are but surface-waves of that same great ocean, is knowledge. To the Hindu, knowledge, therefore, is that which enables him to see the transient merge in the eternal by his transcendental vision. Herein is his bliss and the urge of life, the conclusion of all philosophy and religion too. To accomplish this is the function of great teachers and the *raison d'être* of drama.

Drama, therefore, cannot logically be only the depiction of life as it is seen and lived on the surface. The invisible other side as well, the undercurrent which life is oblivious of in pleasure and pain, should be suggested by it. Then only can drama expand vision. It can neither be picture-painting nor anything only didactic: the former has no lesson and the latter has no life. The one has nothing to teach and the other no appeal, having no touch with life. But drama worth the name should reveal the seen and the unseen aspects of life, the conscious undertakings as well as the subconscious undercurrents. The dramatist must remember that dry ethical sermons alone cannot be appreciated and much less remembered. Abstract thoughts are not meant for the majority of mankind who can think only in forms. This aspect of psychology must be foremost in the mind of the dramatist.

Life being what it is—neither pleasure nor pain exclusively—drama, too, cannot be wholly a comedy or a tragedy. The purpose of it, therefore, should not be to represent life as optimistic or pessimistic but visionful if not transcendental. For instance, what use has the common world of a Buddha or a Christ if it cannot have a glimpse of the glory of their renunciation? It is that vision of the resurrection that makes the cross a bed of roses. And no drama can have a mission for the commonalty which has not that vision. It was well said, therefore, when a great seer remarked that the 'drama is the *pratinidhi* (representative) of all thinkers, the *nidhi* (depth) of *navarasas* (emotions) and the *sannidhi* (proximity) of God'. The purpose and fulfilment, too, of drama is, therefore, in its true vision of life.

TRANCE, SAMADHI, AND VISIONS

By Swami Saradananda

II

The Master used to say that in his ascent to the state where the *nirvikalpa samâdhi* (transcendental absorption) of the Vedantic path can be achieved, he was obstructed neither by any object nor by any relationship. For had he not, even from the beginning, given up all hankering after enjoyment for the sake of having a glimpse of the lotus feet of the blessed Mother of the Universe? Being attracted by the Mother, he had completely rooted out from his mind all kinds of desire and passion with this prayer: 'Mother, I offer Thee herewith Thy knowledge and Thy ignorance; I offer herewith Thy virtue and Thy vice; I offer herewith Thy good and Thy bad; I offer herewith Thy fame and Thy infamy; vouchsafe me only pure devotion to Thy blessed feet.' Alas, can we ever think of that one-pointed devotion, leave aside its realization? Even if our lips should say to God some time,

'Lord, I offer all that I have to Thee,' we forget all about it the next moment and speak in terms of personal possession and weigh in the balance our gains and losses. At every turn we are conscious of public opinion and are ever busy and agitated. We are sometimes at sea at the thought of the future, while at other times we are swept along with delight; and we have laid the flattering unction to our souls that even though we should not be able to overhaul the world, we can make substantial changes here and there. The Master's mind did not play the swindler with him. As soon as he said, 'Mother, take here the things that Thou gave,' his mind ceased forthwith to look hankeringly at them. From that moment he ceased to have even such regrets as: 'Well, it cannot be helped now; I have already spoken the word. It would have been better if I had not done so.' It is because of this that, when once the Master had offered anything to the Mother, we never noticed him calling it his own again.

We want here to draw the reader's attention to another fact. Though the Master offered to the Mother virtue and vice, merit and demerit, good and bad, fame and infamy, and all such mental and physical appendages, he could never utter: 'Mother, I offer herewith Thy truth and Thy falsehood.' The Master himself once explained the reason to us. He said, 'If I offer truth in that way, how can I stick to the truth that I have offered everything to the Mother?' In fact, what a veracity we did observe in him even after his offer of everything! He kept his appointments scrupulously. If he promised to take a thing from some one, he could accept it from none else. From the day that he said, 'I shall not eat this thing any more,' or 'I shall never do such a thing again,' he could never eat or do it again. The Master used to say, 'One who sticks to truth, realizes the Lord of truth. The Mother never allows any utterance of a truthful man to be falsified.' As a matter of fact, we have innumerable instances of this in the Master's life. It will not be out of keeping to place some of these before the readers.

It was once arranged that Gopal's Mother who was intensely devoted to the Master, would cook for him. Everything was ready; the Master sat for meal, when he found that the rice was not well boiled; it felt hard. He was annoyed and said, 'How can I eat this rice? I shall nevermore eat from her hands.' When these words dropped from the Master's lips, the people present thought that this threat was nothing more than a sort of admonition to Gopal's Mother to be more careful in future. For, otherwise, how could it be possible that he would nevermore eat from Gopal's Mother whom he loved so much? He would, therefore, excuse her after a short while and would forget all about that. But it turned out to be quite otherwise. For, a little later, the Master had an ailment in his throat, which increased gradually till he could no more eat rice, so that he had no occasion to take rice from Gopal's Mother again.

Once, while in trance at Dakshineswar, the Master said, 'In future I shall take nothing but porridge, only porridge.' The Holy Mother (i.e., Shri Ramakrishna's consort and first disciple) who was then carrying his food to him, and knew that whatever dropped from his holy lips was never in vain, became much concerned and said, 'I shall cook curry for you, which you will take. Why should it be porridge alone?' The Master, still in trance, said, 'No, porridge.' Shortly after, he had the throat disease which made it impossible for him to take any curry; he lived only on rice and milk, or barley and milk, etc.

Of his four 'suppliers of needs', the Master pointed out the late Shambhuchandra Mallik as the second. Contiguous to the Kâli temple of Rani Rasmani, he had a garden-house where he spent much time, in the Master's

company, engrossed in Divine talks. He had also a charitable dispensary in that garden. Shri Ramakrishna suffered frequently from stomach trouble. Shambhu Babu who came to know of this, once advised him to take opium, and requested him to get the drug from him before returning to Rasmani's Kâli temple. The Master agreed. But during the talk they both forgot all about it. Taking leave of Shambhu Babu, the Master came to the road, when he recollected the matter and turned back; but he found that Shambu Babu had gone to the inner apartments. Without calling him back for that purpose, the Master obtained some opium from one of his clerks and proceeded towards Rasmani's garden. But no sooner was he on the road than he felt dazed, which obliterated the road. Something seemed to drag his feet to the drain by the road-side. The Master thought: 'What is this! This is not the road to be sure!' And yet he could not trace it. As a last resort he turned towards Shambhu Babu's garden, thinking that he had lost his way. The road that way was quite clear. After a little reflection he retraced his steps to the gate of Shambhu Babu's garden, from which he re-started cautiously towards Rasmani's garden, taking careful note of the alignment of the road. But hardly had he proceeded a step or two when the same thing occurred again—the road was no more visible. The feet felt pulled backwards. After this had happened several times, it flashed in his mind: 'Oh! Shambhu said, "Get the opium from me." Instead of doing that I have taken it from his clerk. That is why the Mother does not allow me to proceed. The clerk should not have given it without his master's order, and I, too, as directed, should have taken it from Shambhu. Otherwise, the way I am carrying the opium amounts both to falsehood and theft. That is why the Mother has thus made me bewildered, and is not allowing me to return.' With this thought he returned to Shambhu Babu's dispensary to find that the clerk, too, had left the place—he, too, had gone elsewhere for his meal. So he threw the packet of opium into the room through a window and called out, 'Hullo! Here I leave back your opium.' There was no such daze this time on the return path, the road was quite clear, and he went easily. The Master used to say, 'It is because of my complete surrender to the Mother that She has taken hold of my hands and does not allow me to take a single false step.'

Innumerable are the instances of this sort that we heard of in the Master's life. What a wonder it was! Can we even conceive an iota of this truthfulness and this complete surrender? Is this the same surrender of which the Master told us again and again in a parable? 'In that part of the country (i.e., at Kamarpukur, the birthplace of the Master) there are raised foot-tracks across paddy fields, over which people walk from village to village. The track is narrow. The father, therefore, carries his little boy on his arms lest he should slip down, while the older boy, being cleverer, clasps the father's hand and walks along. As they proceed, the boys espy a kite or some such thing and delightfully clap their hands. The boy in the father's arms knows that the father has taken hold of him, and completely gives himself up to merriment. But the boy who has taken hold of the father's hand, forgets the risks of the track, and as soon as he leaves his grasp on his father's hand and claps hands, he topples down and cries. Similarly, one has no fear if one's hand is grasped by the Mother, while one who grasps the Mother's hand is in fear of falling down as soon as that grasp is loosened.'

Thus, no worldly passion or desire stood in the way of the Master's realization of *nirvikalpa samâdhi*, as due to his extreme love for God. Nothing and nobody of this world attracted or seduced him. There stood in his way only the 'beautiful, outstandingly elegant, and surpassingly exquisite' form of the Mother of the Universe whom the

Master had so far known as the essence of all essential things and the highest of all high things, and had accordingly rendered his loving worship. The Master said, 'No sooner had I collected my mind and concentrated it, than there stood before me the form of the Mother! Then it was impossible to leave Her and proceed further along the path. As often as I tried to empty my mind and reach equipoise, the same thing occurred. At last, after deep reflection, I gathered strength of mind, and imagining knowledge as a sword, I mentally cut that form into two with it. Then nothing was left in the mind. At a single bound it now reached the stage of transcendental absorption.'

To us such things are mere empty words. For we have never fully accepted any form or idea of the Mother of the Universe as our own. We have never learnt to love anyone with our whole being. We have that kind of love for our own body and mind, and this pervades our whole being through and through, yea, even to the very bottom of our minds. Hence we are afraid of death as well as a total transformation of the mind. The Master had no such handicap. He accepted the Mother's lotus feet with heart and soul as the be-all and end-all of life. He meditated on these feet and spent his life in rendering service to them. So when he once succeeded somehow in removing that form from his mind what else could bind down his mind to this world? It became completely cut off from objects and free from modifications, and could not stop short of the transcendental state. Reader, if you cannot comprehend that, try at least to imagine it. Then you will understand how intensely the Master had made the Mother his own—with what a full and undivided heart he had loved Her.

The Master stayed in this state of transcendental absorption continuously for a period of six months. He said, 'I stayed in that very state for six months, from where ordinary souls never return, their bodies dropping down like dry leaves after twenty-one days only. I had no idea as to when day began or night ended. Flies entered into my nose and mouth as into those of a corpse, but there was no reaction. The hair became matted through collection of dust. Maybe, there were unconscious evacuations which had no effect on my mind. There was little chance of the body's outlasting this, it would have died then, had not a monk come at this time, who had in his hand a baton-like stick. He knew my real state at sight, and realized that through this body much work of the Mother yet remained to be performed; many people would be benefited if this could be preserved. So, at times of meal, he would fetch the food and try to bring back consciousness by beating me. Whenever there was a slight indication of it, he would force some food into the mouth. Thus some food reached the stomach now and then, though often enough it did not. Thus passed by six months! Then, after some time in this state, I heard the Mother's voice, "Do thou stay at the threshold of the super-conscious plane." Then I had a disease—blood-dysentery with intense griping pain in the stomach. After I had suffered from this disease for about six months, the mind descended gradually to the physical plane—and I regained consciousness like ordinary mortals. Otherwise the mind would at frequent intervals rush, of its own accord, to the state of transcendental absorption.'

In fact, we have heard from those who had the good fortune of meeting the Master at least ten or twelve years before his passing away, that even then they had seldom the opportunity of hearing him talk. For all the twenty-four hours he was in a state of trance, let alone talking to others! We have heard from Vishvanath Upadhyaya, who was an officer of the Nepal State and whom the Master addressed as Captain, that he had seen the Master continuously in the super-conscious state for three days together! He

further said that during such deep and prolonged trance, clarified butter, prepared from cow's milk, used to be rubbed now and then on his body from neck downwards to the lower end of the back-bone, and from the knees to the feet, and as a consequence the Master felt it easier to return from deep trances to the subject-object plane.

Often enough, the Master himself told us: 'This mind naturally leans upwards (i.e., towards transcendental absorption). And once in trance, it loathes to come down. I bring it down forcibly for your sake. Unless I pin it down to some desire of the lower plane, I cannot exert sufficient force. It is, therefore, that I say, "I shall smoke, I shall drink, I shall eat curry, I shall see so and so, I shall talk." Such petty desires are first raised in the mind and repeated continually till the mind comes down (to the body). It may again happen that while coming down it turns and hurries back that way (upwards). Then I have to cajole it back once more through such a desire.' What wonder! We sat dumbfounded at such revelations and thought: 'If the dictum, "Do whatever you like after taking firm hold of the non-dualistic realization," means this, then it will be a very easy matter indeed to achieve that in our lives! It seems that the only means, within our competence, is to surrender ourselves unreservedly.' But when we tried that, we found to our dismay that it was no easy matter. Even when treading that path, the evil mind spurts out now and then: 'Why should not the Master love me best of all? Why should he not love me as much as he loves Narendranath (i.e., Swami Vivekananda)? In what respect am I inferior to him?'—and so on and so forth! Let us now drop this topic and return to the matter under discussion.

We shall relate here something about attitudes and *samâdhi* of the highest order of which we have heard from the Master, and then we shall try our best to expatiate on what is meant by being at 'the threshold of the super-conscious'. We have already stated that physical changes of some sort or other must accompany mental dispositions, however high or low the latter may be. This needs no particular pleading, for it is a matter of daily observation. We can easily understand this from a study of daily experiences: our bodies undergo one kind of transformation under anger, another kind under love. Again, if good or evil tendencies should predominate in any person, his body receives such a deep impression of these that people can easily infer his character from his physiognomy. Besides, our use of such sentences in common parlance as, 'This man looks irritable, lascivious, or saintly,' is proof positive of that. Moreover, it is within the personal experience of most of us as to how a devilish man of ugly demeanour and perverted nature gets soft and attractive features and noble bearing if he for some reason or other spends some six months continuously in good thoughts and deeds. Western physiologists say that all thoughts, of whatever kind they may be, leave some permanent impression on the brain. A man's goodness or badness depends on the sum total and relative preponderance of these good and bad impressions. The Eastern, and particularly the Indian, Yogis and Rishis declare that these thoughts do not end by leaving these impressions on the brain, they again induce one to undertake good and bad deeds in future; and being transformed into subtle impulses they live permanently at the lower end of the spinal column, in the region of what is called the *mulâdhâra*, that is to say, the store-house of impulses gathered through successive lives. These are called *samskâras* or *purvasamskâras* (instincts), which are destroyed only through a direct vision of God or on the attainment of *nirvikalpa samâdhi*. Otherwise the individual souls carry these bundles of instincts, even when proceeding from one body to another,

'like a puff of wind blowing away the aroma of perfumes'.

That kind of intimate connection between body and soul persists up till God-realization. If anything happens to the body, the mind reacts; and if anything happens to the mind, the body reacts. Like this close correspondence on the individual plane, here is a connection between the mind of the human race as a whole and the individual bodies composing that whole. The actions and reactions between your mind and body find their repercussions in those of others. Thus the outer and inner, the gross and subtle worlds are permanently linked together and act and react on each other. Thus you see that where there is a pall of sorrow all around, you too feel depressed, and where there is an atmosphere of devotion, you too spontaneously become a devotee. Similarly also in other spheres. It is due to this that mental dispositions or attitudes are as effectively contagious as bodily diseases or health. They, too, spread according to the predisposition of individuals. The scriptures accordingly eulogize so highly the efficacy of good company. The Master, therefore, told all newcomers, 'keep on visiting this place; it is necessary in the beginning to come here off and on.'

Just as with ordinary mental conditions, the changes that come over the mind as a result of chaste, undivided, and intense love for God, cause strange physical transformations. For instance, when such a love dawns, the aspirant has less attraction for worldly objects than formerly, his food and sleep get reduced, he develops a taste for certain kinds of food and distaste for others, he feels an inclination to shun as poison the company of wife and children and such other people whose worldly relationship distracts him from God, he has a predominance of *vâyu* (the windy humour), and so on and so forth. The Master used to say, 'I could not bear the company of worldly people; I felt choked and dying when in the midst of my relatives.' And he added, 'Anyone who calls on God will have his *mahâvâyu* (vital energy) rushing up to his head.'

So we see that the mental moods or dispositions, consequent on love of God, have their physical correlates or reflections. From the point of view of the mind, the Vaishnava Tantras have divided these attitudes into five classes, viz, tranquility, servantship, comradeship, parenthood, and consortship. And from the point of view of the physical transformations, the Yogashâstras have described the *Kundalini-shakti* (the coiled up energy) and the six *chakras* (plexuses) in the spinal column and the brain.

When thou rememberest God, do so with all thy heart wholly set on Him. Let thy mouth speak no words. Shut all outward doors (the doors of the senses) and let open the door within.

Take up the remembrance of God as the fish takes to water. Separate the fish from the water, and in a moment it dies; so much is its dependence on water!—SAINT KABIR.

'WOOD'S CHARTER' : ITS PART IN INDIAN EDUCATION (1854-82)

By Mrs. Swarnaprabha Sen

I

In 1854 came the famous Despatch of Sir Charles Wood (Viscount Halifax), then President of the Board of Control, marking an epoch in the history of education in India. Parliament had revised and renewed the Company's Charter in 1853, and education was one of the problems that were foremost in the minds of the Government. The material prosperity of the country during Lord Dalhousie's reign spoke of the comparative peace and progress of the time, and the Despatch of 1854 ushered in a new era in the history of education in an atmosphere of general advancement. It was a comprehensive and wide scheme that contained the germs of all later developments achieved up to the present day. This Despatch definitely declared the Government's policy towards the people, which included not only the material prosperity of the land but also the attainment of a high, all-round moral and educational standard. It was considered the duty of the Government to assist the education of the people by systematic guidance and pecuniary help. It was admitted to be a legitimate subject for the Government which required efficient officers to carry on the day-to-day administration.[1] The Despatch recognized the honour due to ancient traditions and institutions while it declared at the same time the intention of the Government to diffuse the improved arts, science, philosophy, and literature of Europe, in short, European knowledge, among the people of India.

[1] '... in India, where, the well-being of the people is so intimately connected with the truthfulness and ability of officers of every grade in all departments of the State,' —Paragraph 3 of the Despatch.

This was of course meant for the middle class people who had made a demand for it—for the mass the vernacular was always, even as early as that, thought the best and the only mode of approach.[2]

The teachers, however, had to be equipped with a decent knowledge of both the tongues. This bilingualism was enjoined upon the teacher and paragraph 14 of the Despatch ends: 'We look, therefore, to the English language and to the vernacular languages of India together, and it is our desire to see them cultivated together in all Schools in India of a sufficiently high class to maintain a schoolmaster possessing the requisite qualifications.'

One of the remarkable features of the Despatch was the emphasis which, at that early stage in the history of modern education in Bengal, it laid upon elementary education and the position of the modern Indian languages. The Despatch refused to sanction any religious teaching, as 'directly opposed to the principle of religious neutrality to which they had always adhered'. Its scope, however, was not limited to the elementary and secondary schools and to their inspectorate to religious instruction or curricula—it created a separate department for education and decided, by way of providing suitable machinery,

[2] 'It is neither our aim nor desire to substitute the English language for the vernacular dialects of the country. We have always been most sensible of the importance of the use of the languages which alone are understood by the great mass of the population. These languages, and not English, have been put by us in the place of Persian in the administration of justice, and in the intercourse between the officers of government and the people. It is indispensable, therefore, that in any general system of education the study of them should be assiduously attended to.'—Paragraph 18, Wood's Despatch.

to found universities in India.[3] It created the Education Departments with their proper paraphernalia. So long public funds were spent upon a few Government schools and colleges; but the departments of public instruction would produce spontaneously organized schools and stimulate local activity throughout the length and breadth of the country, so that a time might come when it would be unnecessary for the Government to maintain any schools of its own. Recommendation for the establishment of universities was one of the chief features of the Despatch which persuaded the Directors of the Company that already there existed a demand for a regular and liberal course of education. Entry to public service was already dependent upon examination results. The universities should be examining bodies for the time being and confer academical degrees on the students and thus enable them to enter the European republic of letters. The London University, recently established, was taken as the model for the Indian universities. Producing qualified teachers, paying special attention to women's education, encouragement of the translation of the European books into the vernaculars, etc., are other notable features. Some of these items could not be 'at once translated' into action, but they were not lost to view.

The Despatch, like all other schemes, has no doubt had its limitations; but the comprehensiveness of its scope and its effects on the social and moral life of India cannot be denied. Even today the system of education in India is based on foundations which got their brick and mortar from the Despatch of 1854, sometimes called the 'intellectual Charter of India'. Principal James admirably sums up its importance in the following paragraph :

Unquestionably, the despatch of 1854 is a most memorable document. It rises to the height of its problem and comprehends its length and breadth. It outlines a complete and systematic organization of education in India from the university to the elementary school. In the fifty-six years that have passed since it was received, Government, the Education Departments, and private effort have toiled and panted at the tasks it set: they are straining at them still, and adequate fulfilment is not even yet within view. For it is nothing short of a complete system of national education which it sketches. The Despatch of 1854 is thus the climax in the history of Indian education: what goes before leads up to it; what follows flows from it. It offers a convenient measure both of attainment and of failure of attainment. It will repay, therefore, the most careful study in relation to the problems of today.[4]

II

'Wood's charter,' this important document of one hundred paragraphs, was published at a moment when the very existence of British authority in India was seriously questioned by a rising of the Sepoys in the North. And though the disturbances were quelled, and the authority passed from the East India Company to the direct control of the sovereignty of England, the authorities minutely scrutinized the provision because they would give no more handle to the discontented elements in the people. However, the Legislature passed the necessary Act for the establishment of a university at Calcutta in 1857; the universities of Bombay and Madras followed in the same year. The universities became astonishingly popular, the number of examinees went up by leaps and bounds, and the eagerness displayed by the upper and middle classes throughout the length and breadth of the country for the distinction implied by a university degree was marvellous.

Bengal was the first province to undertake primary education; by 1881 about 836,000 children were being educated at an annual expense of five lakhs only. It was also the province

[3] '. . . the time has now arrived for the establishment of the universities in India, which may encourage a regular and liberal course of education, by conferring academical degrees as evidences of attainment in the different branches of art and science, and by adding marks of honour for those who may desire to compete for honorary distinction.'—Para. 24, *ibid.*

[4] *Education and Statesmanship in India*, 1797-1910—H. R. James (1911). Pp. 37-38.

which had put forward the first definite proposal (which was no doubt turned down by the directorate of the East India Company) for a university (that was in 1845) and the number of colleges which sprung up in Bengal and the number of candidates they qualified for the university examinations fully justified its establishment. The University of Calcutta held its jurisdiction over eighteen colleges in Bengal, seven in North-Western Provinces, one in the Punjab, one in the Central Provinces, and two in Ceylon. It was the first university in India to hold a matriculation examination. More than a thousand students appeared for this examination as early as 1861. The university has provided a uniform test of the education received in the schools and colleges. It has Westernized the educated section of the children of the soil which has had the effects of the Western influence in so many spheres of life. The number or quantity may not be in all cases a proof of the intrinsic merit of a thing, but in the years immediately following, the examination results were watched with anxious care by the public. The first graduates had a prestige which in these days we cannot dream of.

In spite of the rapid expansion there were voices of discontent with the kind of education imparted through the universities. People doubted if the university could provide education in the true sense of the term. Whether the graduates of the university were really equipped with 'high ability and valuable attainment' or whether the standard of education in this university could command respect abroad—these were the questions that turned up, and they brought about the consequent reforms in university education. One thing is clear—the university education had succeeded in convincing the people of Bengal that university degrees were the only true test of a boy's merit, and Government service was the only goal of the first class boys, whereas business and industry were for the second and third rate people. This has been imbibed so deeply that we are not yet out of the wood; and big businesses, which require independent thinking and alertness, awarded only a secondary place in the scheme of our standard of values, have been sadly neglected. Other provinces have scored over Bengal in this matter and we find today all the big concerns in Bengal in alien hands. The call of Sir P. C. Ray and a few others has been only a matter for the last two or three decades,[5] and the response has been, all things considered, meagre.

III

The universities had been started; but they did not yield as rich a harvest as was expected. Constant vigilance was necessary, and public criticism was roused. Measures were called for, and, in this article, the first reform measure will be sketched.

This first step in the reforms relating to university education was taken in 1882. It was found during the decade preceding that the number of High Schools had risen to 209 against 47 in 1855, and High Schools were considered only as vehicles of transport to the university, the entrance to which was the sole ambition of the literary classes. The Government had diminished its expenditure on secondary education, which had become self-supporting through the increasing number of candidates for the Entrance Examination of the university. Thus the university and the secondary schools were influencing one another and the Department of Public Instruction was losing its control over the educational system.

The growth of private colleges, however, was not so remarkable. The St. Xavier's College (1860), founded by the

[5] 'Paradoxical as it may seem the more a Bengali shows his aptitude for original work in art or sciences the more helpless and incapacitated he becomes for earning his livelihood. One fights shy of taking him even as an apprentice as he talks big and suffers from swelled head.'—*Life and Experiences of a Bengali Chemist*, p. 501.

Society of Jesus; the Metropolitan College, started in 1869 by Vidyasagar, the great leader of educational movement in Bengal; the City College, opened in 1881 by the Brahmo Education Society; were the institutions of the kind started during he period after 1854 and before 1882.

The universities did not seem to have improved the teaching in the colleges or offered opportunities to students; but they existed only as administrative bodies conducting examinations and making rules and regulations for the colleges that taught. The function of teaching in the colleges being thus subjected to restriction from outside while deprived of teaching help, they could not rise to the desired level. The Senate of the University of Calcutta was composed of leading public men, not of educationists, and its members seldom included men like Duff, who played an important part in defining the educational policy which should be followed.

A Commission was appointed as a result of public agitation to consider the extent to which the instructions of the Despatch had been carried out; to note their effect on the people; and also to suggest courses of further improvement. Sir William Hunter, member of the Viceroy's Council, presided—and members included Sir S. Ahmed, Babu Bhudev Mukherjee, Mr. A. M. Bose, and Maharaja Sir Jatindramohan Tagore. It had its sittings in Calcutta from December 1882 to March 1883.

The principal recommendation of the Commission was that the Government should devote special care and attention to the cause of elementary education, and the Department of Public Instruction should set apart local funds exclusively for the primary schools. The Government had direct responsibility for primary education. The secondary and college education should only be given when there was local demand for it and co-operation from the people. The management of the secondary schools and colleges should be gradually made over to local people. The Government should confine its work, in the secondary field, to the distribution of grants-in-aid to schools, the grant being in no case more than half the total expenditure. Only first class colleges like the Presidency College were still maintained by the Government. Second grade colleges like those at Rajsahi and Krishnagar were transferred to local bodies. Colleges which could not get local bodies to maintain them according to the university standard would be abolished. That meant the gradual withdrawal of direct Government help and control from higher education except to maintain a few models. In order to encourage the growth of aided schools it was given out that they could charge a lower rate of fees—a recommendation which brought a long series of miseries in its train. When Government institutions with many sources of income other than the college and school fees had to charge a higher fee, it is not difficult to trace the evil effects of the lower scale of fees on the aided institutions. Teachers began to be paid miserably (in privately managed schools the rates varied from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 78/- per month) with the inevitable result that the standard of teaching became lowered, and the institutions suffered from a lack of efficiency. When, later on, the grants-in-aid were made subject to a higher scale in the fees charged and salaries paid to the teachers, many institutions ceased to avail of the Government grants and depended solely on the fees received, thus the numerical rolls became inflated and the standard of education lowered.

This recommendation of the Commission, therefore, has hampered rather than helped the growth and progress of higher education in Bengal.

Measures modelled on European practice may not have been the right ones for India where the relation between the State and the people does not furnish exactly a parallel.

Some of the other recommendations of the Commission deserve to be men-

tioned: attention was drawn to the moral side of education; the schools and colleges were required to maintain a high standard of discipline among the boys. Rules were made for transfer of boys from one institution to another. The university did its best by refusing to admit candidates from any unrecognized school. It was desired to prevent a change of service between inspecting officers and professors of colleges--to keep the tone of the teaching unruffled.

The Commission felt strongly the danger of a too literary course of studies, and urged the need for courses in industrial and commercial pursuits. It recommended two divisions in the upper classes—one going up for the Entrance Examination, the other for a more practical course. The Commission held that the First Arts standard represented the real line of division between university and school work, and that the second grade college ought to be regarded as the highest form of the secondary course—in other words, collegiate instruction should begin at the third year class of present-day colleges.

The reforms of 1882 led to a vast expansion of schools and colleges throughout the country. In 1902, the total number of boys, studying in unaided colleges only, was no less than 4,540. These colleges, in Bengal only, numbered about 20. But the intrinsic worth of education had suffered from a sad neglect. The quantity and the quality were curiously apart from one another. People, however, were generally satisfied at the rapid increase of the number and seemed to be unconscious of the fall in the standard of teaching in the colleges, which depended solely on the low fees of students and necessarily provided inadequate equipment and second-rate teaching. Things could not be expected to be better under the circumstances, and even today we have not outlived such conditions.

THE MESSAGE OF DAKSHINESHWAR

By Prof. Sudhansu Bimal Mookerji

From time immemorial India has been the meeting place of divers cultures. Countless hordes in quest of plunder and conquest have poured into the fertile plains of India, chiefly through Afghanistan, appropriately called 'the corridor of the world'. Aryan genius possesses the remarkable virtue of absorption and assimilation. Consequently, assimilation and not annihilation has been the racial policy of Aryanized India and, to quote Dr. S. N. Sen, 'in this magic cauldron (India) have been thrown divers cults, languages, and civilizations to be brewed into a wonderful potion that still brings peace and solace to millions of human beings'. But by the beginning of the nineteenth century of the Christian era the nation had already been considerably devitalized as a result of long centuries of political bondage and fell an easy prey to the glamours of the Western civilization which had considerably risen above the Indian horizon.

This nineteenth century is at once one of the most shameful and most glorious epochs in the annals of India. For one thing, it was now that the accumulated effects of political serfdom began to be felt. An inferiority complex permeated the nation. Not a minor role was played by Christian missionaries and Christian professors in bringing about this state of affairs. It was dinned into our ears that everything Indian and Hindu was bad, that everything old must be discarded. Christian missionaries as educationists have carved out for themselves a niche

in the history of modern India. But they were narrow-minded and short-sighted as missionaries. To facilitate evangelization they opened a crusade of calumny against Hinduism. One woman missionary went so far as to say, 'Crystallized immorality and Hinduism are the same thing.' Young India believed *in toto* what was said and made serious efforts to be modernized overnight. The realization of Macaulay's dream of an anglicized India[1] was well within sight. It was a crisis of culture—the most serious that ever threatened the Aryan.

It was the same nineteenth century again which saw the beginning of the Indian renaissance. It may be most appropriately called the 'seed time of modern India'. It was the age which gave birth to spiritual giants like Dayananda, Rammohan, and Ramakrishna. We leave out of consideration the stalwarts in other walks of life—political, literary, and scientific.

India needed a saviour with Shankara's brain and Buddha's heart. The hour brought forth its man. The ageless soul of hoary India manifested itself on the bank of the holy Ganges. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was born of poor Brahmin parents at Kamarpukur in Hoogly (Bengal) on 17 February 1836.

Without entering into a technical discussion as to the marks of an *avatâra* (incarnation) we might hazard the opinion that he is one through whom the Divine Will manifests and fulfils itself. Judged by this criterion, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is undoubtedly an *avatâra*.

From the dawn of his consciousness man has asked the questions: Is there a God? Can He be attained and if so, how? Religious systems are but different answers to these questions. Apparently divergent as they are, a strong undercurrent of unity runs through them. This fundamental unity notwithstanding, these systems have waged countless battles against one another, and untold barbarities perpetrated in the name of religion are an indelible blot on man's history.

Romain Rolland has very aptly compared the different religious sects to armies beleaguering the same fortress—God. The investing forces are, however, not in co-operation with one another, and consequently they cannot accept one another as allies. One aim permeates them all nevertheless.

Differing in externals, these systems are at one so far as the fundamentals are concerned. The fundamental unity screened behind apparent diversity stands revealed to the sincere seeker after truth. The day when this unity is realized by humanity at large many of the problems of modern life will be solved. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is one of the very few who had this realization. He has never uttered a single word in condemnation of any sect. This testimony from Swami Vivekananda, the 'patriot saint of modern India', can certainly be accepted unquestioningly. He realized that it is rituals that keep off man from man. The relation between a grain of rice and its husk is no more intimate than that between a religion and its externals. Ramakrishna was an embodiment of this great truth. He knew that of religious sects some emphasize *bhakti* (devotion), some *jnâna* (knowledge), some *yoga* (concentration), and some again *karma* (action). He gave a practical demonstration that all these four aspects can be developed by the same individual and firmly believed that in the age yet to be born man will be able to achieve this. He, it may be said without any fear of contradiction, is the boldest spiritual idealist the world has yet seen.

The Saint of Sevagram has thus summed up the greatness of the Messiah of Dakshineshwar, 'The story

[1] Cf. 'We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect.'—Lord Macaulay.

of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's life is a story of religion in practice. His life enables us to see God face to face. . . . His sayings are not those of a mere learned man, but they are pages from the Book of life.'

Ramakrishna sought and realized the Supreme Soul in It's different aspects—*Shâkta*, *Vaishnava*, *Tântrika*, Vedantic, Christian, Muhammedan, and Sufi. All his doubts were now set at rest. He demonstrated the truth of the deathless saying of the Gita—the song celestial—that the Lord reveals Himself to the devotee in the form He is sought after. One day a man was disparaging other religious sects before him. The Master sharply retorted that though some get into the house through the main gate and some again through the backdoor, the destination is the same.

True religion is being and becoming and it is the endeavour of a devotee to make his life beautiful. Ramakrishna was eminently successful in this endeavour. His life blossomed out as a thousand-petalled lotus rearing its head up in the sky, or as a thousand-stringed musical instrument, each string reverberating with the rhythm of synthesis. His noblest contribution, surest of all, is the demonstration of the possibility of the realization of the ultimate Reality without rejecting its manifestations, divers and varied as they are. A happy day it will be for humanity when this possibility becomes a reality in the life of man. A parliament of men and a federation of the world will then be possible. Class war and sectional interests will be memories of the past. Looked at from this angle of vision Ramakrishna is in the vanguard of India's struggle for the achievement of national unity and, what is more, of world peace.

He came 'to fulfil, not to destroy'. His message drew its inspiration from the Upanishads and he is the culmination incarnate of the spiritual quest of India. 2,500 years ago the spontaneous flow of love and fraternity that welled out of the heart of the all-renouncing Prince-Prophet of Kapilavastu gave a new direction to the thought-current of the nation. The message preached by the Messiah of Dakshineshwar—re-vitalized the nation and injected a new life into its culture.

Let us be worthy of the noble heritage left for posterity by the man-God of Dakshineshwar. Let a constant prayer well up from the innermost depths of our heart—

From untruth lead us to truth.
From darkness lead us to light.
From death lead us to immortality.

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE MAN OF ALL TIMES

By Arwind U. Vasavada, M.A.

Since the impact of the West due to British connection, India has been trying to preserve her right place in the cultural history of the world. The propaganda of the Christian missionaries and our ignorance and indifference towards our own culture led us to think then that there was nothing valuable in the Hindu culture. Hindu religion was idol worship, magic, and degenerate animism; Hindu philosophy pessimistic; its social tradition decrepit; and the unscientific way of life obstructed the growth of individuals. It was to the credit of Shri Ramakrishna that he cleared the above misconception about Hinduism and drew it out of its narrow outlook and gave it a universal turn.

Great men of those days may be forgotten; but the dust of ages will not cover the name of Shri Ramakrishna. He is the Eternal Man who rises from

the horizon and disappears leaving his message for generations to acquire and assimilate. Born of a poor family, with little education as a boy, he rose like a beneficent moon flooding the whole world with his generous love for all, and thrilling the whole universe by the outpourings of his intense love for God. His message was at home to all—learned and unlearned, poor and rich, men of all sects and creeds. He was as much the spirit of his age as that of all times. When India had become the battle-ground for different religions to proclaim their greatness by rival demonstrations and internal quarrels, his message came as the peace-giving influence to all. He announced gently but very forcefully to everyone the truth and greatness of all religions and showed, by his personal example, their capacity to lead man to the realization of God. He was the very spirit of toleration, which is the heart of Hinduism.

His life started with intense love for Mother Kâli. He renounced everything to please and realize Her. His love for God was so intense and exuberant that it could not be satisfied by this one approach to God. There were the *tântric* and the Advaitic ways and also those of the Christians and the Moslems. He sat at the feet of the great masters of these religions and realized Shiva, Shakti, and the God of the Christians and the Moslems. Could there be a better and clearer demonstration of the rightness and the greatness of all religions? And could this be better exemplified in one man's life? Ramakrishna was a great experimenter in the realm of religion. He was never wearied of repeating the message of unity of all religions and the cultivation of true worship. Dogmatism in religion, according to him, was the worst crime. He says, 'My religion is true whilst that of the others is false—this kind of belief is not right. It is not our business to correct them, our duty is in some way or other to realize Him.'[1] He could say on the authority of his personal experience, 'I have seen all sects and all paths. I do not care for them any more. People belonging to these sects quarrel so much! After trying all religions, I have realized that God is the Whole and I am His part; that He is the Lord and I am His servant; again I realize, He is "I"; "I" am He.'[2] What is essential is one's intense and sincere love for God. 'When there is true devotion and love, one can reach God by any of the sectarian religions.'[3]

Ramakrishna was a realized soul—a God-man. There were no intellectual confusions, doubts, and vascillation in his mind. He was simple and humble, and his vision of truth straight and clear. He spoke of difficult problems of philosophy in a simple, lucid, and forceful manner. He often used parables which were easy to understand, and they went directly to the heart of the hearers. Speaking about differences in religions, he says, 'These distinctions exist because God has made different people understand Him in different ways. The difference lies in the nature of individuals. Knowing this you will mix with all as closely as possible and love them as dearly as you can.'[4] Further, using an imagery, he explains, 'When cowherds drive the cattle to the pasture from different quarters, the cows form themselves into one herd as if of the same family, but when they return at night, they separate, each going to its home. So the *bhaktas* of different sects and creeds, when they meet, are like members of the same family, but when they are by themselves, they show their peculiar beliefs and different creeds.'[5] This was the universal element in the teaching of Shri Ramakrishna.

Another important teaching of his is that God is both with and without form, personal and impersonal. There is no conflict between the path of devotion and that of wisdom. This and other

[1] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (R. K. Vedanta Centre, N.Y.), p. 27.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 27.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 345.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 345-6.

teachings of Shri Ramakrishna have far-reaching importance at present. He believed that the path of devotion and that of wisdom both lead to the realization of God. But the former is suited particularly to the present age. God can be sought in numerous ways, and He joyfully responds to the call of His devotee, whichever way he may choose to follow; what is needed is the sincere love for Him. 'Who can say what other aspects He may have!'

The path of devotion is easier to follow. The sense of 'I', the greatest obstacle in God-realization, is very difficult to be completely overcome through the path of wisdom. He says, 'The path of wisdom is very difficult. It cannot be followed so long as the sense of "I" is connected with the body. In this age the consciousness of body and the sense of "I" cannot be overcome easily. But in the path of devotion, through prayer and repetition of His holy name with extreme longing, God can be reached without fail.'[6] The path of devotion makes use of 'I' for its own purpose. It dedicates it to the service of God. Therefore, he says, 'The servant "I" or "I am the servant of God", "I am His devotee", this egoism is not bad, but on the contrary it helps to realize God.'[7]

The path of devotion, which he enjoins, does not necessitate the renunciation of the world. God is to be realized while we live in this world. It is not necessary to go out into the wilderness to find Him. It is better and safer, he says, to fight from within one's own fort rather than from outside. All that is necessary for the devotee is to cultivate non-attachment towards this world. Having practised it through periodical solitude, one should create within oneself fervent longing for God. These means are sufficient to lead one to God-realization.

Shri Ramakrishna does not agree with the world-illusionism of some thinkers. For him, the self and God—all are real, being the manifestations of God. He puts it, '. . . I accept all states as true,—the state of *samâdhi*, which is the fourth state, and again the waking, dream, and dreamless sleeping states. I accept Brahman the Absolute and *mâyâ*, *jiva* (the individual soul), and the world. If I do not take all, a portion will be missing, and the weight will be less.'[8] Making the statement clear by the example of a fruit, he says, 'I take both the Absolute reality and the phenomenal reality. I do not blow away the phenomenal world by calling it a dream, because then the weight will be less.'[9]

In the final stage of God-realization, the individual is absorbed in God. 'The great souls who have realized the Absolute, have not come back, because after attaining the highest knowledge of Brahman, one absolutely loses the sense of "I". The mind ceases to be active, and all sense-consciousness vanishes. This state is called *Brahma-jnâna* or Divine Wisdom.'[10]

In his talk with Keshab Sen, we have valuable advice for all those who think of starting a new creed. He did not believe in public controversies or demonstrations for defending one's view of religion. In one discourse he tells the Brahmos, 'You are Brahmos, you believe that God is formless and you do not believe in God incarnate. Well, it matters not. You need not accept Râdhâ and Krishna as incarnations of the Supreme Being; but the intense love and yearning which the Gopis felt for Shri Krishna, is a thing which you may well make your own, for yearning is the next step to God-vision.'[11]

He corrects the new religious enthusiasts who identify social work with religion. He asserts again and again, 'First cultivate devotion; all other things—schools, dispensaries, and charitable work shall, if you wish, be added unto you.' One should not lose sight of the goal—complete renunciation. Self-surrender to God is the essential

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 56-7.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 95.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 96.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 255.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 164.

pre-requisite of God-vision. When Keshab Sen asks him as to how he can see God, Ramakrishna beautifully answers him, 'So long as the child is absorbed in playing with its dolls the mother does not come. But when the child throws away the dolls and cries for the mother, the mother cannot stay away.'[12]

The life and teaching of Shri Ramakrishna should be taken as our guide in adapting our culture to the impact of the West. The West has brought the teaching of Jesus and the emphasis on this world. Shri Ramakrishna points out how this stands in relation to the Eastern ideal of renunciation. He asks us to live in the world and still be above it and warns us against entering into theological discussions about the merits and the demerits of other religions. His last word to all is, 'On whatever path you may travel, whether you have faith in God-incarnate—in human form or not—if you have intense and sincere longing for Him, you are sure to attain Him. He alone knows what He is like.'[13]

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 164.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 258.

THE STUDY OF A SOUL IN CONFLICT

BY P. J.

In London, fifteen years ago, Aldous Huxley was the idol of the young intellectuals—particularly those belonging to high-brow circles in Mayfair. Quoting Huxley was, in those days, almost as fashionable for a sophisticated young man or woman as discussing Freud and his complexes or Epstein and his models. This was but natural in the decade of bitter disillusionment and frustration which followed the tragicomedy enacted at Versailles by the victors of the First Great War. The rumble of the Second Great War which was to start in the next decade was already faintly audible; but slogans like 'democracy in danger' and 'fight against tyranny' had already lost their former appeal; and in Oxford, that 'home of lost causes', a band of undergraduates had the courage to pass a resolution that, if war came again, they would *not* fight 'for king and country'!

The books written by Huxley during that period of disillusionment—whether novels, short stories or essays—showed consummate artistry and brilliant wit; but an undercurrent of cynicism was also discernible in most of them together with a recurring note of frustration. In the opinion of some, the Huxley of that period was

> too intelligent and too sophisticated by upbringing and temperament to be genuinely absorbed by anything he undertook. As a writer, he knew a good deal about everything, from biology to music and from chemistry to mysticism; but was unable to integrate his knowledge. He was a split personality, the prototype of a modern Hamlet who could see beyond the surface of things and who realized the need for action, but was constantly afraid to do what alone he considered to be right.

Judged by two of Huxley's 'best sellers' published in the last years of that decade —*Jesting Pilate* (1927) and *Point Counterpoint* (1928)—this opinion of the critics appeared to be correct. *Jesting Pilate* was the result of the author's first contact with India and the Far East; and, as the title of the book implies, Huxley's attitude towards what he saw and heard was that of an unbeliever and a scoffer. Proud of his scientific training and his capacity for ridicule, he seemed to take a delight in attacking the cherished idols of India—whether it was the celebrated beauty of the Taj Mahal or the unrivalled power of Hindu mysti-

cism. A little self-analysis—(did the successful young author ever submit himself to that process in those days?) —would have shown Huxley that his reaction was simply that 'of a highly sophisticated European taking up a defensive attitude towards all things Eastern: defensive, because the psychological mechanism of frustration always leads to a wholesale denial of spiritual or ethical values.' The book abounds in clever paradoxes—a device often used by a writer 'to hide his own lack of faith and convictions'. For instance:

> And what meaning for us have those airy assertions about God? God, we psychologists know, is a sensation in the pit of the stomach, hypostasized: God, the personal God of Browning and the modern theologian, is the gratuitous intellectualist interpretation of immediate psycho-physiological experiences. . . .

One can almost hear, in the conceited assertion: 'God, we psychologists *know*, etc.', the familiar ring of the voice of the Freudian who naively believes his science of psycho-analysis to be so perfect as to be infallible, not only in the case of the sub-conscious, but even where *supra-conscious* experiences are concerned!

The critics who summed up Huxley as an apostle of the post-war decade of frustration, did not, however, know that this was but a passing phase in his evolution as a man and a writer. It took the proud scoffer ten long years to outgrow his feeling of frustration and the resulting cynicism. But when, at last, his first great book *Ends and Means* was published in 1937, his critics, as well as those who idolized him, gasped with wonder, because it revealed an entirely different Huxley whose existence no one had ever suspected. That book was the author's first serious attempt at integrating an entirely new system of values. He was no longer a 'jesting Pilate' who would not wait for an answer to the question: What is Truth? He now actually showed himself to be an uncompromising moralist for whom 'good action' would be possible only when ends and means had become identical. What, however, totally confounded the critics was their discovery that the former atheist had now actually become an exponent of the central truth of all mysticism—especially Hindu mysticism—that only selfless and non-attached action can make the way clear for attaining a knowledge of God or Reality!

Two years after the publication of *Ends and Means* came the present World War which Huxley had clearly foreseen. Sick of hearing once more the parrot-cries of the recruiting sergeant, like 'The War to end War', he went away to America—then neutral—rather than be a spectator of the war and its horrors in his own country. This conduct was obviously so unpatriotic, and therefore un-English, that several of the respectable London reviewers who still believed, like their ruling class, in the 'old school tie', were profoundly shocked; and they appear to have come to a tacit understanding that the renegade author's forthcoming books should not be afforded the same generous space in their columns as his former publications. They evidently failed to reckon with the possibility of one of Huxley's new books being so great that it would not stand in need of their support. This is exactly what happened in 1942, the third year of the War.

Huxley had made his temporary home in a quiet corner of Hollywood, not for film-making, but for applying his well-equipped and disciplined mind to a further study, both deep, and critical, of mysticism—Buddhist, Hindu, Chinese, Christian, and Sufi. He was still, like Jung, 'the modern man in search of a soul', but his quest appears to have gone further than that of the great psychologist. His attitude towards life was no longer, as in the past, that of an intellectual, proud of his scientific training and encyclopædic knowledge. He was now a humble seeker after truth, trying to emulate,

not 'the self-centred personal will' of the *Great Men* of history, but 'the will of the self-abnegated person (which) is relaxed and effortless, because it is not his own will, but a great river of force flowing through him from a sea of subliminal consciousness that lies open in its turn to the ocean of reality'.

As a result of this quest, Huxley wrote—what is perhaps his greatest book,* so far—the biography of Father Joseph of Paris, popularly known in seventeenth-century France of Louis XIII as *L' Emincnce Grise* in contrast to *L' Eminence Rouge*, the nickname of his scarlet-robed collaborator, Cardinal Richelieu. Although this was the author's first attempt at a full-length historical portrait, the book is so remarkable as a work of art; as a scholarly and, at the same time, a tremendously vivid description of conditions in seventeenth-century Europe; and, finally, as a searching commentary on the deepest and most baffling problems of life, that any famous biographer might well envy Huxley's genius and capacity for throwing new light on past events. It is, without doubt, one of the greatest psychological biographies written by a Western writer during the last quarter of a century. If a comparison may be made, it seems that only about half a dozen other great biographies written in the West during that period can be put in the same class. Those which immediately come to mind are: Rachel Taylor's *Leonardo the Florentine;* Romain Rolland's *Life of Vivekananda;* J. W. Sullivan's *Beethoven;* Stefan Zweig's *Erasmus;* Emil Ludwig's *Goethe;* and Rene Füllop Miller's *Rasputin*. Each of these six great biographies is, like *Grey Eminence*, concerned with the pilgrimage on earth of a complex soul; but it is only in the case of the first three books, that the authors are, like Huxley, capable of dealing adequately with the vital significance of the *spiritual* conflicts and development, or lapses, of their heroic subjects. So far as a deep understanding of mysticism is concerned, the only one of the six authors with whom Huxley may be properly compared is Romain Rolland.

If the question were asked: What is the very first reaction of a careful reader of *Grey Eminence* on finishing the book? The answer, in the majority of cases, would probably be that in this book Huxley has shown, in greater measure than in any of his previous works, his uniqueness among modern writers as a master of the art of *multum in parvo* ('much in little'). As historical biographies go, the size of *Grey Eminence* which consists of only 278 pages (*including* an appendix; three pages of translations from the French; and a comprehensive Index) is almost insignificant. But one cannot help the feeling, after a first reading, of having gone through a book of at least three times the size of this slender volume. The reason is that Huxley's flow of thought is so disciplined that he rarely uses a superfluous word. There are, no doubt, important digressions containing the author's comments on points arising from certain incidents in Father Joseph's life; but none of these digressions is ever irrelevant to the great issues involved. Though the reading of the book is a rich literary repast, its close-packed thought often makes exacting demands on one's mental capacity. By comparison, the reading of nearly a thousand pages of Ludwig's two-volume *Goethe* is far less taxing for the mind, although that biography is also great in its own way.

Another thing that at once strikes any one familiar with Huxley's development as a writer is that the author of *Grey Eminence* is no longer the brilliant stylist of the novels—for instance, of *Eyeless in Gaza* published in 1936. A discriminating reader of Huxley has suggested two alternative reasons—both

**Grey Eminence: A Study in Religion and Politics*: By Aldous Huxley. 1942: Chatto and Windus, London—15 Shillings net.

cogent—for this clearly perceptible change in the author's style:

Perhaps, only a mind which is constantly stimulated at a 'clever-intellectual' level can sparkle forth into literary brilliance; but the expressions of the mind which has plumbed a warmer depth are bound to be less spectacular. It is also possible that, with his new-found piety and determination to face Reality, Huxley is consciously clothing his style in sackcloth.

A hasty reader of this book was recently inclined to think that, on occasions, Huxley had succumbed to the temptation of over-dramatizing the character of Father Joseph. A more careful reading would have convinced him, however, that this was far from the truth. Even more than being a master of condensation, Huxley is, by training and temperament, a master of *under*-statement. Being a confirmed believer in the value of the scientific method, he is one of the most restrained of modern writers and would be the last person to indulge in over-statement or the use of superlatives. Actually, his fear of giving expression in writing even to a genuine emotion has been so great as to be almost morbid. Even in the finest passages of his book, he is temperamentally incapable of rising to really great emotional heights, like, for instance, Romain Rolland in his *Life of Vivekananda*. If then, there often appear to be 'high lights' in the delineation of Father Joseph's character, they are due to the complex and unique nature of that character itself. Among the memorable figures of history, here was one whose extraordinary life illustrates the homely adage that 'truth is oftentimes stranger than fiction'. Huxley himself recognizes this fact when he says:

Romance is always poorer and less strange than the facts it distorts and over-simplifies. This imaginary Father Joseph, who is the prototype of the ridiculously villainous figure bearing his name in Vigny's *Cinq Mars*, is just a bore, whereas the real Father Joseph moves through history as the most fascinating of enigmas.

This is not to say that the sensitive artist in Huxley is not fully alive to the sense of the powerful and compelling drama inherent in the unfolding of the Capuchin's life. The very first chapter of the book, *On the Road to Rome*, is a masterpiece of the dramatic art, almost as great as a scene from Greek tragedy or from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Listen to this:

The image of Calvary rose up before the friar's mind—the image that had haunted him ever since, as a tiny child, he had first been told of what wicked men had done to Jesus. He held the picture in his imagination, and it was more real, more vivid than what he actually saw of the road at his feet. 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Pity and love and adoration suffused his whole being, as with a sensible warmth that was at the same time a kind of pain. Deliberately, he averted the eyes of his mind. The time had not yet come for such an act of affection and will. He had still to consider, discursively, the ends for which the Saviour had thus suffered. He thought of the world's sins, his own among them, and how he had helped to hew the cross and forge the nails, to plait the scourge and the crown of thorns, to whet the spear and dig the sepulchre. And yet, in spite of it, the Saviour loved him and, loving, had suffered, suffered, suffered. Had suffered that the price of Adam's sin might be paid. Had suffered that, through his example, Adam's children might learn how to conquer evil in themselves. 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.' Loving, one was forgiven; forgiven, one became capable of forgiving; forgiving, one could open one's soul to God; opening one's soul to God, one could love yet more intensely; and so the soul could climb a little higher on the ascending spiral that led towards perfect union. *Ama, et fac quod vis.* ('Love, and do what thou wilt.') 'Let there be love,' he repeated, modulating his orison out of Meditation into Affection, transforming it from an act of the discursive intellect into an act of loving, self-renouncing will. 'Let there be love.' And taking his own lovelessness, taking the malignantly active nothing that was himself, he offered it up as a sacrifice, as a burnt offering to be consumed in the fire of God's love.

Another reader of the book—an enthusiastic Freudian—finds it difficult to believe that Father Joseph actually had any direct contact with the Absolute; because if he had, how could he ever be capable of conduct which resulted in the deliberate prolongation of the ruinous Thirty Years' War, with all its attendant horrors? As a loyal Freudian, this reader is also convinced that the friar's strange conduct can be

adequately explained only in the language of psycho-analysis.

His first conclusion that there cannot have been any real contact with the Absolute, if the person supposed to have experienced such contact afterwards indulges in manifestly wicked actions, appears to be due to a common misconception regarding the actual nature of contact with the Absolute, or God, or Reality. All the great mystics—Eastern and Western—have made it clear that such contact or union with Reality may become complete and continuous, as in the case of a Buddha, a Jesus, a Ramakrishna; or it may be only partial and fleeting, as in the case of Father Joseph. Spiritual history also records more than one case of subsequent moral collapse among those of the second class. Huxley clearly recognizes this distinction when he says about Father Joseph:

> Well, he had been a beginner, hugging the shore of vocal prayer and discursive meditation; then, growing more proficient in pure contemplation, he had launched out further and further into the boundless sea of divine reality. And then Richelieu had appeared and it had seemed his duty to do the exterior will of God by serving that instrument of Providence called the French monarchy. At the beginning he had not doubted his capacity to do his political duties and still remain at sea, in the presence of God. But as time went on he had found himself forced back towards the coast, and his glimpses of that bright torch of the sovereign good became more and more infrequent. As a young man, he had described the experience of union with an eloquence whose passionate ardour seems to prove two things; first, that he had himself experienced union, and second, that *that experience of union was not of the highest order;* for mystical experiences of the highest order do not lend themselves to expression in terms of the violently emotional language employed by Father Joseph.

The Freudian reader's second conclusion that Father Joseph's indifference to the cruelty, torture, and bloodshed accompanying the war which he helped to prolong, must have been due to repressed masochistic and sadistic tendencies, appears to be based mainly on the '*theory* of psycho-analysis that such tendencies are latent in most persons. It has no actual support in any of the incidents of the friar's comparatively happy childhood and youth; unless it be argued, in the approved Freudian style, that the child's abnormal grief on first hearing the story of Christ's Passion revealed a masochistic tendency. It may similarly be argued that the fact that Louis XIII, as a child, 'was birched every morning before breakfast' under the orders of his stupid mother, must necessarily have turned him into a sadist!

The same reader also suggests that a further reason for the friar's strange callousness to suffering might be found in an 'obsessional neurosis' caused by the 'frustration' of his first love-experience. But, surely, 'frustration' is not the correct word to use for the deliberate uprooting of the violent passion which the fourteen year old Baron de Maffliers had conceived for his girl friend. The girl never rejected his love. It was the boy himself who was troubled, from the first, with a sense of guilt:

> Those Plutarchian heroes were there to remind him that love is the enemy of high ambition; those hermits proclaimed the vanity of human wishes; and when he prayed, the old facility of communication between his soul and its God and Saviour was lost.

It is also clear from the Baron's life in the years immediately following the uprooting of that 'uneasy passion,' that the boy's love for the girl became almost completely sublimated into the youth's love for Christ.

No, the danger of using, indiscriminately, the attractive formulae evolved by psycho-analysis to explain any strange character, is that such explanation has often the fatal tendency to over-simplify—a tendency which Huxley is never tired of deprecating. Father Joseph's character is undoubtedly

> the strangest of psychological riddles—the riddle of a man passionately concerned to know God, acquainted with the highest forms of Christian gnosis, having experienced at least the preliminary states of mystical union; and, at the same time, involved in court intrigue and international diplomacy, busy with political propaganda, and committed whole-heartedly to a policy whose

immediate results in death, in misery, in moral degradation were plainly to be seen in every part of seventeenth-century Europe, and from whose remoter consequences the world is still suffering today.

Such a riddle cannot be solved by simply classifying its subject as a sadist or a masochist, or as a victim of an obsessional neurosis.

Although psycho-analysis, in the Freudian sense, was not known in seventeenth-century Europe, Cardinal Richelieu, a very shrewd judge of character, had two nicknames for his old friend and collaborator which were

admirably chosen to describe that curiously complex nature. *Ezechiely* was the enthusiast, the visionary, the Franciscan evangelist and mystic; *Tenebroso-Cavernoso*, the man who never gave himself away, the poker-faced diplomatist, the endlessly resourceful politician. These two strangely dissimilar personalities inhabited the same body, and their incongruous conjunction was an important element in the character of the man. . . .

In the years when he wrote *Jesting Pilate*, Huxley, the young cynic, was himself an enthusiastic Freudian. He still recognizes the immense value of the pioneer work done by the great Viennese doctor in the field of experimental psychology. But, after long years of trial and error, he now also realizes the limitations of the psycho-analytic method and can no longer concede the extravagant claims of some of its dogmatic votaries. He is himself a psychologist of the highest order; but his penetrating insight into the workings of the mind is also illumined by the intuition of a great artist as well as by a philosophic balance, and a discriminating sense of history—especially the history of mysticism from the earliest times in the East and in Europe. Is it any wonder that, with such equipment, Huxley's own explanation (which follows) of Father Joseph's gradual moral decline and strange inconsistency of character and actions is far more satisfying than the sweeping psycho-analytical explanation discussed in the preceding paragraphs?

Father Joseph was diverted from the road of mystical perfection by a set of closely related temptations—the temptation to do what seemed to be his duty, to accomplish what was apparently the external will of God; the temptation to be mistaken about God's will and to choose a lower at the expense of a higher duty; and the temptation to believe that a disagreeable task must be good just because it was disagreeable. . . . Father Joseph . . . was intensely a patriot and a royalist. Born and brought up among the civil wars, he had conceived a veritable passion for national unity, for order and for what was then the sole guarantee of these two goods, the monarchy. This passion had been rationalized into a religious principle by means of the old crusading faith in the divine mission of France and the newly popularized doctrine of the divine right of kings. . . . Granted the validity of these doctrines, doctrines which he held with a burning intensity of conviction—it was obviously Father Joseph's duty to undertake political work for king and country, when called upon to do so. It was his duty because, *ex-hypothesi*, such political work was as truly the will of God as the work of preaching, teaching and contemplation.

We come now to the second temptation—the temptation to fall into error regarding God's will. . . . Father Joseph believed that the cause of God and the cause of France were inseparable. . . . There seem to be two reasons (for this belief). The first is that the circumstances of his upbringing had created habits of thought and feeling which, in spite of his long-drawn effort to kill out the old Adam in him, he had found it impossible to eliminate. To the second we are given a clue by a penetrating phrase of Victor Cousin's. In one of his studies of seventeenth-century manners, that philosopher-historian remarked of Father Joseph that 'he was a man without ambition for himself, but full of a boundless ambition for France, which he regarded as the great instrument of Providence.' In spite of his reading of the theocentric moralists, in spite of all the thought he had given to the right relationship between man and God, Father Joseph had failed to see that *vicarious ambition is as much of an obstacle to union as personal ambition*—that a craving for the glorification of France is merely Satan's 'manlier object' at one remove. And whereas personal ambition is regarded by all the moralists as undesirable, only the most advanced theocentrics have detected the perniciousness of vicarious ambition on behalf of a sect, nation or person. For the immense majority of mankind, such ambition appears to be entirely creditable. That is what makes it so peculiarly dangerous for men of good-will, even for aspirants to sanctity, such as our Capuchin. Father Joseph had freed himself from personal ambition; but as the devoted servant of a providential France and a divinely appointed Louis XIII, he was able to go on indulging the passions connected with ambition, and to go on indulging them, what was more, without any sense of guilt. To put it cynically, he could enjoy subconsciously

the pleasures of malice, domination and glory, while retaining the conviction that he was doing the will of God. . . .

What finally tempted Father Joseph to commit himself definitely to a political career was the fact that a political career was extremely arduous and, to a part at least of his nature, disagreeable. Tenebroso-Cavernoso might enjoy the scheming and the diplomacy, and Ezechiely might vicariously exult in his royal master's triumphs. But the contemplative who had spent so many hours of each day in communion with God could not but suffer from having henceforward to devote the greater number of those hours to affairs of State. That he should deal with such affairs was, however, his duty and the will of God, who evidently desired to try to the limit his powers of active annihilation. . . . As a child he had asked to be sent to school for fear his mother should turn him into a molly-coddle; and now, as a man, he thought it his duty to accept the burden of political responsibility. A part of him, it is true, rather enjoyed the burden, but there was another part that groaned under its weight. It was because of that groaning that he felt himself justified in enjoying, that he felt finally certain that in accepting Richelieu's invitation he was doing God's will. . . .

. . . in spite of his theoretical and experimental knowledge that good cannot be mass-produced in an unregenerate society, Father Joseph went into power politics, convinced not only that by so doing he was fulfilling the will of God, but also that great and lasting material and spiritual benefits would result from the war which he did his best to prolong and exacerbate. He knew that it was useless to try to compel the good ladies of Fontevrault to be more virtuous and spiritual than they wanted to be; and yet he believed that active French intervention in the Thirty Years' War would result in 'a new golden age'. This strange inconsistency was, as we have often insisted, mainly a product of the will —that will which Father Joseph thought he had succeeded in subordinating to the will of God, but which remained, in certain important respects, unregenerately that of the natural man. In part, however, it was also due to intellectual causes, specifically to his acceptance of a certain theory of Providence, widely held in the Church and itself inconsistent with the theories of action and the good. . . . According to this theory, all history is providential and its interminable catalogue of crimes and insanities is an expression of the Divine will. As the most spectacular crimes and insanities of history are perpetrated at the orders of governments, it follows that these and the States they rule are also embodiments of God's will. Granted the truth of this providential theory of history and the State, Father Joseph was justified in believing that the Thirty Years' War was a good thing and that a policy which disseminated cannibalism, and universalized the practice of torture and murder, might be wholly accordant with God's will, provided only that it was advantageous to France. . . .

If history is an expression of the divine will, it is mainly so in a negative sense. The crimes and insanities of large-scale human societies are related to God's will only in so far as they are acts of disobedience to that will; and it is only in this sense that they and the miseries resulting from them can properly be regarded as providential. Father Joseph justified the campaigns he planned by an appeal to the God of Battles. *But there is no God of Battles;* there is only an ultimate reality, expressing itself in a certain nature of things, whose harmony is violated by such events as battles, with consequences more or less disastrous for all directly or indirectly concerned in the violation.

There is no need of an apology for the length of the passages quoted above, because it is in them that Huxley has explained, with remarkable insight and clarity, the inner meaning of the tragic conflict which raged in Father Joseph's soul—a soul of fascinating interest, and in some respects, even lovable (in spite of its fall) in comparison with the odiously pompous, mammon-worshipping soul of Cardinal Richelieu.

When the news of the famous Cardinal's death was brought to Urban VIII, 'the old pope sat for a moment in pensive silence. "Well," he said at last, "if there is a God, Cardinal Richelieu will have much to answer for. If not, he has done very well." ' It is a pity that history does not tell us if this same old pope had anything to say on hearing of the earlier passing of Father Joseph; because the scurrilous couplet which some disgruntled hater of the friar chalked on the slab covering his grave, did scant justice to the finer side of the man. Referring to this anonymous distich, Huxley pertinently says at the end of the book: 'It is always easier to make an epigram about a man than to understand him.'

During the last period of his life Father Joseph himself realized, probably better than his worst enemy could have done, what had actually happened to him :

He had the dreadful certainty that God had moved away from him. It was a dark

night of the soul, ... not the dark night of those who are undergoing the final and excruciating purgation from self-will; no, it was that much more terrible, because fruitless and degrading, dark night which is the experience of those who have seen God and then, by their own fault, lost him again.

The aging friar's knowledge of his true state is proved by the following passage quoted by Huxley from a letter written by him at this period to one of the Calvarian Abbesses:

I know by personal experience—I who, in punishment for my faults and having misused the time God gave me, have now so little leisure to think of my inward being and am for ever distracted by a host of different occupations—I know how bad it is not to be united to God, not to give one's soul into the possession of the spirit of Jesus, to be led according to his will; and I know too how necessary it is for this to keep good company, in which the faithful can help and strengthen one another. When I think thus and then look and see how I and the most part of creatures live our lives, I come to believe that this world is but a fable, and that we have all lost our senses—for I make no difference, except for a few externals, between ourselves, the pagans and the Turks.

Huxley's comment on these words of the friar's letter is expressed in one of the most moving passages of the book—a passage which shows his power of combining pathos with biting irony :

These are despairing words, words that make one wonder whether the unhappy man had come to doubt of his salvation. And having penned them, back he had to go to the hideous work to which his duty to the Bourbons had harnessed him, the work of spreading famine and cannibalism and unspeakable atrocities across the face of Europe. Back he had to go to the distracting cares which cut him off from the vision of reality; to the bad company of King and Cardinal, ambassadors and spies; back finally to all the criminal follies of high statesmanship; to the Satanic struggle for power in a world which he knew to be a fable, a mere nightmarish illusion; to the orgies of violence and cunning; to the dreary battles of force and fraud, waged by two parties of mad men between whom, as he had now come to perceive, there was nothing whatever to choose. And as a reward for turning his back upon God, they had promised to give him a red hat.

As already shown, this slender volume not only makes the dry bones of history and of characters like Father Joseph and Cardinal Richelieu vividly alive, but it has also the unique merit of being packed with illuminating comments on problems of life and of the soul which are as important today as they were in seventeenth-century Europe. Some of these comments have already been reproduced, and there is a great temptation to quote many more; but space forbids doing this except in the case of three which have an important bearing on present-day problems.

In analysing the anonymous little book called *The Cloud of Unknowing* which he calls 'one of the finest flowers of medieval mystical literature', Huxley throws a veritable search-light on the little understood subject of '*distractions*':

... The passions and the discursive intellect are not the only components of the self; there is also a great psychological province to which the name most commonly given by mystical writers is 'distractions', a province little touched upon by ordinary moralists and, for that reason, worth describing in some detail. Contemplatives have compared distractions to dust, to swarms of flies, to the movements of a monkey stung by a scorpion. Always their metaphors call up the image of a purposeless agitation. And this, precisely, is the interesting and significant thing about distractions. The passions are essentially purposeful, and the thoughts, the emotions, the fantasies connected with the passions always have some reference to the real or imaginary ends proposed, or to the means whereby such ends may be achieved. With distractions the case is quite different. It is of their essence to be irrelevant and pointless. To find out just how pointless and irrelevant they can be, one has merely to sit down and try to recollect oneself. Preoccupations connected with the passions will most probably come to the surface of consciousness, but along with them will rise a bobbing scum of miscellaneous memories, notions and imaginings,—childhood recollections of one's grandmother's Skye terrier; the French name for Henbane; a white-knightish scheme for catching incendiary bombs in mid-air—in a word, every kind of nonsense and silliness. The psycho-analytical contention that all the divagations of the subconscious carry a deep passional significance, cannot be made to fit the facts. One has only to observe oneself and others to discover that we are no more exclusively the servants of our passions and our biological urges than we are exclusively rational; we are also creatures possessed of a very complicated psycho-physiological machine which grinds away incessantly and, in the course of its grinding, throws up into consciousness selections from that indefinite number of mental

permutations and combinations struck out in the course of its random functioning. These permutations and combinations of mental elments have nothing to do with our passions or our more rational mental processes; they are just imbecilities—mere waste products of psycho-physiological activity. True, such imbecilities may be made use of by the passions for their own ends, as when the Old Adam in us throws up a barrage of intrinsically pointless distractions in an attempt to nullify the creative efforts of the higher will. But even when not so used by the passions, even in themselves, distractions constitute a formidable obstacle to any kind of spiritual advance. The imbecile in us is as radically God's enemy as the passionate and purposeful maniac, with his insane cravings and aversions. Moreover, the imbecile remains at large and busy, when the lunatic has been tamed or actually destroyed. In other words, a man may have succeeded in overcoming his passions, in replacing them by a fixed one-pointed desire for enlightenment, and yet still be hindered in his advance by the uprush into consciousness of pointless distractions. This is the reason why all advanced spirituals have attached so much importance to these imbecilities and have ranked them as grave imperfections, even as sins. . . .

To distractions within correspond the external distractions of civilized life—news, gossip, various kinds of sensuous, emotional, and intellectual amusements, novelties and gadgets of every sort, casual social contacts, unnecessary business, all the diversified irrelevances whose pointless succession constitutes the vast majority of human lives. Because a large part of our personality is naturally imbecile, because we like this imbecility and have made a habit of it, we have built ourselves a largely imbecile world to live in. Deep calls to deep; inner distractions evoke outer distractions, and in their turn the outer evoke the inner. Between congenitally distracted individuals and their distracting, imbecile environment there is set up a kind of self-perpetuating resonance. . . . Every sensitive human being has at one time or another realized the pointlessness and squalor of the common life of incessant and reiterated distractions, has longed for one-pointedness of being and purity of heart. But how pitifully few have ever chosen to act upon this realization, have tried to satisfy their longing! None has written more eloquently of the misery of the distracted life than Matthew Arnold. And yet, though he was fairly well versed in Christian literature, though, as a young man, he had been profoundly impressed by an early translation of the Bhagavad Gita, he sought no practical remedy to that misery, and denied, even as a matter of theory, the very possibility of such a remedy existing. . . . Like so many poets and moralists before him, Arnold had stated a problem to which there is no practical solution, except through some system of spiritual exercises. In the overwhelming majority of individuals, distraction is the natural condition; one-pointedness must be acquired. One-pointedness can, of course, be turned to evil purposes no less than good. But the risk of actualizing a potential evil must always be run by those who seek the good. In this case, the good cannot be achieved without one-pointedness. That Arnold should have failed to draw the unavoidable conclusion from the premises of his own thoughts and feelings seems puzzling only when we consider him apart from his environment. The mental climate in which he lived was utterly unpropitious to the flowering of genuine mysticism. The nineteenth century could tolerate only false, ersatz mysticism—the nature-mysticism of Wordsworth; the sublimated sexual mysticism of Whitman; the nationality-mysticisms of all the patriotic poets and philosophers of every race and culture, from Fichte at the beginning of the period to Kipling and Barres at the end. Once more, Arnold's 'sad lucidity' did not permit him to embrace any of these manifestly unsatisfactory substitutes for the genuine article. He chose instead the mild and respectable road of literary modernism. It was a blind alley, of course; but, better a blind alley than the headlong descent, by way of the mysticisms of nationality and humanity, to war, revolution and universal tyranny.

How true and vitally important these thoughts are for our own days of war and famine! Huxley is, perhaps, not quite fair to Wordsworth and Whitman; but is there any doubt whatsoever that Kipling's 'mysticism of nationality and humanity' was 'false (and) ersatz'? It is a great tragedy that the old Conservatives who today actually rule Britain and its far-flung Empire, were brought up, even from their cradles, to believe, almost fanatically, in that 'ersatz nationality mysticism' preached by Kipling along with his sanctimonious doctrine of the 'White man's burden'. Is it any wonder that a realist like Huxley could not tolerate the unreal atmosphere of his home-country under such a regime?

In discussing the idea of vicarious suffering which is associated with the story of Christ's Passion, Huxley quotes the following extraordinary passage 'from a letter addressed to a west-country newspaper by a clergyman of the Church of England and published in the spring of 1936':

The principle of vicarious suffering pervades history, some suffering and dying for the sake of others. The mother for her sick

child, the doctor in his laboratory, the missionary among the heathens, the soldier on the battle-field—these suffer and sometimes die, that others may live and be happy and well. Is it not in accordance with this great principle that animals should play their part by sometimes suffering and dying to help in keeping Britons hardy, healthy and brave?

Huxley then makes the following caustic comment on this part of the clergyman's letter :

That such lines could have been penned in all seriousness by a minister of religion may seem to many almost unbelievable. But the fact that they actually were penned is of the deepest significance; for it shows how dangerous the idea of vicarious suffering can become, what iniquities it can be made, in all good faith, to justify. God took upon himself the sins of humanity and died that men might be saved. Therefore (so runs the implied argument) we can make war, exploit the poor, and enslave the coloured races; and all without the slightest qualm of conscience; for our victims are illustrating the great principle of vicarious suffering and, so far from wronging them, we are actually doing them a service by making it possible for them 'to suffer and die that others (by a happy coincidence ourselves) may live and be happy and well.'

One wonders if the strange complacency shown, at first, in Whitehall towards the question of deaths from starvation in Bengal last year was, to some extent, the result of the influence —subconscious of course—of this idea of vicarious suffering on the minds of those in authority !

In speaking of Action *ve.* Contemplation Huxley makes the following interesting comment on the nature of good action:

To us, 'life of action' means the sort of life led by movie heroes, business executives, war correspondents, cabinet ministers and the like. To theologians, all these are merely worldly lives lived more or less unregenerately by people who have done little or nothing to get rid of their Old Adams. What *they* call active life is the life of good works. To be active is to follow the way of Martha who spent her time ministering to the material needs of the master, while Mary (who in all mystical literature stands for the contemplative) sat and listened to his words. When Father Joseph chose the life of politics, he knew very well that it was not the life of action in the theological sense, that the way of Richelieu was not identical with the way of Martha. . . .

Some reader of this article who has not had the good fortune of having already read the great book it describes, might be apt to think that Huxley is so serious a writer that he has no time to laugh at the jokes—sometimes cruel —which destiny often delights to play even with the most famous of her children. This is far from the truth. Huxley has, in addition to his other great qualities, a keen sense of humour. No doubt, it is not the kind of humour that would be appreciated by the respectable and 'correct' old 'ladies' of Kensington, because it is of the Falstaffian variety. But any intelligent reader of the book who is not too easily shocked, is bound to enjoy it. One of the typical instances in this book of Huxley's sardonic humour is his entertaining description of Cardinal Richelieu's painful complaint of piles:

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries no event in the life of an eminent personage was entirely private. Even the act of excretion was often performed in public, and for those whose rank entitled them to this privilege, Kings and Princesses were at home and made conversation while seated on the *Chaise percee.* Diseases and the most intimate forms of medical treatment were no less public. Louis XIV's enemas were discussed by the whole court, and his fistula, or fissure of the fundament, was a matter of national concern. A generation earlier, it had been the same with the Cardinal's piles. There was not a corner of the kingdom to which the news of them had not penetrated. Sympathizers expressed their condolences and many reputedly infallible remedies were sent in—among others a powder invented by a Capuchin monk and guaranteed to cure, not only the Cardinal's haemorrhoids, but also the King's childlessness. When all these had failed, a deputation of clergy proceeded to the Cathedral of Meaux and returned with the relics of that seventh-century Irish hermit, who is the patron saint of Brie and has left his name to the hackney cab, St. Fiacre. The relics were applied; but, in spite of his high reputation as a healer, St. Fiacre was no more successful than any one else. One regrets the fact, not only for the sake of poor Richelieu, but also because St. Fiacre's failure has lost us some curious literature and perhaps some splendid works of art. One can imagine, if the miracle had occurred, the volume of odes, by several hands, in honour of the event. These would have been more odd than good. Not so the enormous composition by Rubens, *that* would have been a thing of unqualified beauty and magnificence. Robed in great cataracts of red silk, Richelieu kneels in the right foreground and rolls up his dark impassive eyes towards a heaven in which, in the top

lefthand corner, and at an altitude of about two hundred and fifty feet, the Holy Trinity and the Virgin look down from their soft cloud, considerably fore-shortened, but with an expression of the liveliest benevolence. Poised only a foot or two above the Cardinal's head, St. Fiacre descends, much bearded and in the ragged homespun appropriate to anchorites. One hand is raised in benediction, and in the crook of his other arm he carries his emblems—a slice of Brie-cheese, a shillelagh and a miniature four-wheeler. From aloft, he is followed by a squadron of cherubs, nose-diving and banking above a delightful landscape where, in the distance, the siege of La Rochelle is in full swing. Immediately above and behind the Cardinal, Louis XIII stands at the head of a flight of steps, his left hand on his hip, his right supported by a long malacca cane. Trailing pink draperies, Victory hovers over him, while the livid form of Heresy grovels in the middle distance. At the bottom of the canvas, immediately below the Trinity and a plane or two behind the nearest foreground, we see a group consisting of Father Joseph at prayer, Sacred Theology in blue and white satin and, representing Literae Humaniores, a young woman from Antwerp, with no clothes on, pointing at a marble slab, upon which we read a Latin inscription alluding to the foundation of the academié Francaise. . . . But, alas, this splendid work was never painted; the bones of St. Fiacre were taken back to Meaux and the unhappy Cardinal continued to suffer the tortures of the damned.

Soon after the publication of *Grey Eminence*, there took place one of those fatuous India Debates in the House of Commons. While speaking, as usual, to an almost empty House, the Secretary of State for India tried, on this occasion, to enliven the proceedings by referring to Huxley's latest book. His purpose in doing so was to draw a comparison between Father Joseph and Mr. Gandhi. For him, Gandhi was, like Father Joseph, a double-souled personality—half-saint and half-politician, with the latter frequently gaining the upper hand. We do not know if the Secretary of State himself actually believed in the validity of this comparison, or if he was using it merely as a 'debating point': because any one who has even a cursory knowledge of Gandhiji's life, knows that there is no real similarity between the two men. For Father Joseph, the greater glory of France was identical with the glory of God, and there were no means, however ignoble, which he would have hesitated to employ to achieve that glory. For Gandhiji, on the other hand, the end, however great or noble, can never justify a bad means. He has often said that Swaraj for India would 'stink in his nostrils', if it were to be gained by means of bloodshed, or even at the cost of his cherished ideals, like the removal of untouchability, or the achievement of Hindu-Muslim unity. Father Joseph's acceptance of the 'providential theory of history' made him believe that even the Thirty Years' War, with all its horrors, was a good thing so long as it was advantageous to France. Gandhiji, if he had wanted, might have immersed the whole of India in a terrible blood-bath during one or other of the stages in the long struggle for independence. But his creed of non-violence is so uncompromising that it has led him, on more than one occasion, to call off the struggle even at propitious moments which would have been eagerly seized by any shrewd politician. Perhaps no Western writer of eminence has so far attempted to understand 'the mighty and pathetic struggling towards harmony' of Gandhiji's soul with such an open mind as Romain Rolland. Let us hope that Aldous Huxley who has shown in his *Grey Eminence* the capacity for such an understanding will some day write a critical Life of Ghandhiji which will adequately explain that struggle.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

The late Pandit Taranath was well known in South India for his thorough mastery of the ancient culture, though his scholarship was not so well known in the North. His *Drama in India* reveals a truly Indian mind, deep in meditation in discovering the spirit of Indian culture. . . . From the historical point of view, Prof. Sudhansu Bimal Mookerji shows the significance of *The Message of Dakshineshwar*. . . . Mr. Arwind U. Vasavada draws pointed attention to one important aspect of that message, viz, its universality. . . . To P. J., who prefers to remain incognito, we are indebted for a critical and elaborate presentation of Aldous Huxley's latest work *Grey Eminence* which according to the present writer, is Huxley's *magnum opus*.

Plan of Economic Development for India

India is beset with many problems today, and different persons are trying to evolve different solutions to them. Economics and politics are the two factors that predominate our national life at the present day. It has been recognized by most people that political freedom by itself will not bring us all that we want unless it is accompanied or preceded by economic stability. A fifteen-year scheme for the post-war economic development of India, to be given effect to in successive five-year plans, has been drawn up by some leading industrialists and economists. It has received wide publicity, and met with general approval as well as with helpful criticism from various quarters. Mr. Manu Subedar, M.L.A., has made a critical study of the memorandum and offered his valuable suggestions in his well-written introduction to a brochure on the subject, extracts from which have been published in the *Bombay Chronicle* (weekly). He welcomes the scheme in so far as it aims at the physical, economic, and moral amelioration of the poor population of India. But he has his differences with the authors of the scheme on certain points. He holds that emphasis should be laid on village industries. He says,

> In any plan of economic expansion in India, the first and the biggest benefit must reach those whose economic resources are the lowest. It is for this reason that I urge in any plan the front place for village industries.

Some of our national leaders are opposed to an economic system in which large-scale industries are carried on by capitalists for profit by exploitation of the masses. As a proof against such inequity, he wants that 'the foundation of an economic edifice must be through the co-operation of the millions of poor people whose condition must improve at the same time'. Neglect of the welfare of the masses, the poor, and the illiterate, has been one of the causes of India's degeneration. Hence the first thing necessary is to achieve material prosperity for and improve the lot of the masses steeped in ignorance and poverty. Therefore, he calls upon the well-wishers of the plan

> to keep in mind that the burdens do not fall on that section of the population, which is suffering much now, and undue advantage is not taken by those classes, who can afford to make sacrifices.

None can minimize the importance of modern industrial methods to India. The authors of the economic plan have shown how backward India is in the matter of production though possessing enormous quantities of material wealth. But it cannot wholly be denied that industrialization after the manner of the West has overpowered some of

the finest handicrafts of the country. Mr. Subedar strikes a note of caution and says,

> it is necessary to secure progress in such a way that artisans engaged in work do not lose their livelihood, and handicrafts are not uprooted.

He is of the opinion that while maintaining factories for the large or basic industries, encouragement should be given to cottage industries as well, thus ensuring a steady increment in the livelihood of millions of people many of whom might otherwise be thrown out of occupation.

Any future industrial plan for our country must look to the regeneration of the masses, and the rehabilitation of the villages. Besides, it must keep spirituality definitely in the forefront. A mechanical civilization believing in routine duty, factory legislation, strikes, lock-outs, class-struggle, and competition will do us no good. India is to be raised by making available to the masses greater means of living and more opportunities for betterment than they have at present. In order to be able to carry out this scheme the authors have estimated the total cost roughly at ten thousand crores of rupees. Any nation-building activity needs large sums of money. But money is not everything. Success depends to a great extent on the morale of the people and the right type of persons, organized and disciplined, and willing to sacrifice in the cause of the welfare of the nation. Mr. Subedar rightly hopes that such persons will not be wanting in India.

> To those who are unduly imbued with Western and foreign thought, it may appear that, without high salaries, able men will not come forward ; but the general population of India would have great faith and hope in progress in this matter through the example of good men, Sadhus, saints, and servants of the people.

The spirit is the essence of man, and in its realization lies permanent peace and satisfaction. Because of our national weakness the masses are economically enslaved and poor. Too much machinery kills initiative, and regimentation makes of man a lifeless automaton. We want our masses to be self-integrated and free personalities who can manage their individual and family affairs independently of the requirements of the factory. It is necessary that they should have sufficient leisure to think of higher things in life as well, and their education should serve to enable them to spend this leisure usefully.

Nationalization of Education

Writing under the above title in the *Social Welfare*, Prof. H. D. Sethna makes some pertinent observations on the future possibilities of Indianizing education, and making it more realistic and true to national ideals.

> To nationalize any field of work is not merely to place it in the hands of Indians. This is a platitude whose meaning we learn with pain in almost every sphere of national endeavour. And specially in education, where we attempt to forge character on the anvil of the highest ideals, we are bound to be stung with disillusionment.

Nationalization of education does not consist merely in taking over the leadership in education, or in having Indian teachers and educational institutions.

> Even more than this, nationalization of education means the spirit of devotion to education. . . . Such devotion was a life of sacrifice and simple living so that the educationists could follow single-mindedly their ideal of teaching the people.

A stereotyped system of education, parochial and alien in outlook, cannot but fail to inspire national fervour or 'develop the best possible manhood' in the Indian youth. The professor is of the same opinion as many other Indian educationists that our present-day educational institutions are 'intrinsically undemocratic, against the very ethics of the fundamental rights of man which is the basis of all true education'. Teaching is often degraded into a profession, which makes it a mechanical routine. But the teacher who does his work with thoroughness, shoulders a

great responsibility in training the faculties of head and heart.

He interprets to the youth the highest ideals in relation to facts and creates new ideals and initiative which will help the young mind to assimilate the present and look forward to the future.

Swami Vivekananda, addressing his countrymen, said: 'It is man-making education that we want all round. We must have life-building, character-making, assimilation of ideas.' He was grieved to see that national weakness and lack of *shraddhâ* had devitalized the youth of the country, and urged them to devote themselves to the service of the motherland with faith and determination. Indianization of education is never complete without the spiritual background which is the innermost core of our national life. Religion and secular education will have to go hand in hand, and the teacher can best serve his pupils by setting before them his own living example of the highest knowledge. It is necessary that the imparting of education be done by men and women of renunciation and self-sacrifice. Or else education will prove no better than mere book-learning and accumulation of information.

Prof. Sethna visualizes a bright future for Indian education in the coming years when the country may witness a renaissance of idea and life under more favourable conditions.

As organized by Indians, it (education) would not be merely to provide clerks for the machinery of Government, but to educate the people of the motherland in a better and healthier way. But even if this outlook is fashioned, there is still much to be done. The educationist has not yet felt the grip of the deeper vision that the nation has to be served, first and foremost, and hence education is only a means to this service. . . . So the activity of the educationists must be directed to enlarging the larger national consciousness and help it to grow and blossom rather than confine itself to teaching a certain set of ideas of one group or the other.

Many people assume that any advancement in the field of education is inevitably linked up with political freedom without the attainment of which, they feel, no national advancement is possible. There are difficulties under foreign rule, but these need not be exaggerated to serve as an excuse for not doing whatever can possibly be done. No doubt with political independence or more active Government support progress would have been quicker. What the country needs most are men of great sacrifice and fellow-feeling.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

STALINGRAD. By Chetan Anand. *Published by Free India Publications, the Mall, Lahore. Pp. 49. Price As. 12.*

The most striking feature of the present war is the heroic struggle put up by the Russians in defence of their country against the German invaders. This booklet gives us an insight into the epic defence of Stalingrad. It is a play in two parts, the leading figures being a Russian captain and his wife. The first part depicts a typical 'action' scene between Germans and Russians in Stalingrad. The second part relates the story of a scene in a Russian emergency underground hospital, incidentally touching upon the undaunted bravery of Russian women and the readiness with which they have come forward to assist in the defence of their motherland.

KALYANA KALPATARU. (Sri Krishna-Lila Number II). *Published by The Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 196. Price Rs. 2-8 As.*

It gives us great pleasure to welcome this special number of the popular English monthly *Kalyana Kalpataru* on its re-appearance after a year's suspension. The present volume, devoted to 'Sri Krishna and His Lilâ', bears the mark of its rich tradition, and the publishers have spared no pains to bring it up to the high standard of the past. There are five well-written contributions. An excellent English rendering (from the Hindi translation) of Skan-

dha X, Part ii, chapters 50-90 of the *Bhâgavata* dealing with Shri Krishna's sports at Mathura and Dwaraka is also brought out in these pages. There are eight tri-coloured and many ordinary illustrations which have always been a special feature of these numbers.

PRACHYAVANI: Journal of the Prachyavani-Mandira, Vol. I. No. 1, January, 1944. Joint Editors: Roma Choudhuri and Jatindra Bimal Choudhury. *Published from 3, Federation Street, Calcutta. Pp. ii+76. Price Rs. 2-8 As.*

A steady increase in the number of genuine scholars in the vast and inexhaustible field of Indology can be unhesitatingly taken as an unmistakable sign of national regeneration in India, and the very many journals, books, leaflets, commemoration volumes, etc., have been representing for a long period this or that aspect of India's national culture. Here is a journal published for the first time, thanks to the sincere and untiring efforts of the editors who are in command of a type of no mean scholarship. It is their common object to further the cause of Indian literary study by publishing and translating texts from MSS. as well as by discussing along with others, various problems and topics related to the whole range of Vedic and classical literature. As such, this enterprise is calculated to shed columns of light on the difficulties of literary history of our country, specially by filling up the apparently unbridgeable hiatuses in the chain.

The present issue contains a good number of articles all of which come from very able and erudite pens. Dr. A. D. Pusalker, in his *Phallus Worship in the Rigveda,* deserves special credit on account of his methodological improvement upon the attainments of Mm. Prof. V. Bhattacharya in his attempt at ascertainment of the true import of the Rigvedic word *Shishna-deva.* The philosophical articles are at once scholarly and readable. Some deal with the classical Sanskrit texts and authors whereunto the enthusiasm and services of scholars have been harnessed. Dr. J. B. Chaudhuri's almost single-handed enterprise in editing the text of *Româvati-shatakam* from a single MS. is really praiseworthy, though there is every possibility of failure in detecting some knotty problems attending upon textual criticism. Dr. C. Kunhan Raja, in his article *Dasharatha's Four Sons,* raises a problem quite enthusiastically at the outset, but his solution is far from convincing: we hear all through his faltering voice. A sad mistake marks Dr. U. N. Ghosal's article *Some Types of Constitutions in the Vedic Samhitâs and Brâhmanas* in that he writes the name of the well-known *Brâhmana* as *Panchavinsati Br.*, instead of *Panchavinsa Br.* (p. 11). Besides, there are some misapplications and omissions of diacritical marks. Another sentence we intend to add here for the editors' consideration is that the price of the volume, as fixed, seems to us to be very high.

In spite of these flaws the whole volume affords interesting reading and no lover of Indian culture can fail to offer sincere congratulations to the editors who have thus formally devoted their lives in such a scholarly pursuit. We hope to see their noble dream materialize on and on.

JAGADISH CHANDRA MITRA

NEWS AND REPORTS

REPORTS PUBLISHED

The following branches of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission have published their reports for the periods mentioned against each:

Ramakrishna Mission Industrial School and Home, Belur ... 1941-43
Ramakrishna Mission (Mauritius Branch), Port Louis, Mauritius ... 1943
Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Salem 1943
Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Karachi 1941-43
Ramakrishna Mission (Lahore Branch), Lahore 1939-43
Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Hardwar 1943

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX JULY, 1944 No. 7



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

WORK AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

By Swami Turiyananda

I am glad to know that you are doing spiritual exercises to the best of your ability at Benares and that you are keeping well. You have received the grace of the Holy Mother, so what fear have you? Now banish all worry by cheerfully resigning yourself to God. Bondages etc., are nowhere without; they are all within. The bondage is in the mind; due to ignorance it is inferred to be without. This is clearly realized when the mind gets purified through one's good actions and the mercy of God. But it is not easy to be free from bondage even after that realization. Freedom from bondage comes through the grace of the Guru and one's own sincere efforts only. However, there is no doubt that you are fortunate. That you have felt that the world is transient and have renounced everything to gain the eternal treasure itself, shows your blessed lot. You have further received the Holy Mother's grace; so there can be no doubt that you are very fortunate. Your desire to visit holy places and to do spiritual exercises at a secluded place is very good. Moreover, you have Mother's permission. Never forget Her counsel to be careful about health. There is no fear wherever you may go with the Lord in your heart. All space is His. Is there any place where He is absent? So there is no cause for anxiety. You can fulfil your desire for visiting holy places and doing spiritual practices at secluded spots without trouble and at will. There can be no objection and cause for complaint in regard to this. But concerning what you have written about being bound by work I do not see any reason for fear.

Doubtless one has to work. How else will the mind be purified? You will be tested when you will work. Only through work can it be known how much desire for results still lingers in the mind, how far the mind has been purified, how much selfishness is there

still, and how far it has lessened, and so on. When love will enter the heart, work will no more be felt as work; work will then turn into worship. That is the true love. In the beginning both are necessary; one has both to work and to do spiritual exercises. Of course keeping the aim steady there will come a time through the grace of God when there will be no more any difference between spiritual exercises and work. Everything will then turn out to be spiritual exercise. No difference will then be felt between work and spiritual practice, for the Lord permeates everything. However, do whatever you strongly feel inclined to do, keeping Him in mind, for neither of these—the performance of desireless work at the Math or doing spiritual exercises at some secluded spot—is bad; both are good. Do not think yourself to be weak. Even if you are weak, He in whom you have taken refuge is all-powerful; so know yourself to be strong in His strength. There is none other, everything that exists is He. If this is firmly fixed in your mind you will have an immense accession of strength. May your love, faith, and devotion to the lotus feet of the Lord increase evermore and may you be absorbed in Him and may this human birth of yours be blessed—this is my prayer.

MAN

BY THE EDITOR

I

To blow away thousands from the mouths of cannon is a small affair that is inevitable if a better society is to come, to burn down towns and cities with incendiary bombs is a matter of easy conscience when the strategies of war demand it, and to look on complacently when millions die of starvation as a result of administrative inefficiency and profiteering is just a regrettable incident that has to be tolerated when a big war is on ! The moral degradation proceeds apace—from misguided idealism comes an advocacy of bad means to serve good ends; bad logic effectively silences conscience; then follows an orgy of rape, rapine, murder, incendiarism, and callousness for human suffering—all in the name of establishing God's kingdom on earth ! Such is the history of mankind ! The social and political ailments are sought to be cured by violent means, just as the old people in remote villages a few generations ago thought that malaria could be cured by a dip in a cool pond followed by a drink of tamarind soup spiced liberally with chilli together with a plate of rice boiled overnight and kept in water to ferment a little !

No one feels that there is something intrinsically bad in our spiritual outlook. No one looks at man as man. All discussions end with some theories and not facts; for, paradoxically enough, this scientific age cares more for convenient theories than facts. And according to present-day theories, human lives are of little consequence if they belong to a camp not our own, for theoretically they are somehow different from us: we give them some names—Huns, barbarians, Whites, Blacks, Yellows, and what not—and let go the machines of death without the least qualm of conscience, for our theory is thereby established all the more emphatically. We call the famished people—once prosperous and sturdy peasants, but now reduced to skeletons as a result of our own policies—destitutes, and that sinister word partly implies to us that

these people as a class deserve to die. There is really much in a name. A convenient name is just a sun-glass for hindering our weak moral vision from getting too much of the light outside. It militates against our perverted nature to recognize men as they really are. We accordingly give them some convenient names which may present them to us, if need be, as worse than pest. And then we eulogize murder as heroism, and suicide as martyrdom! A name can hide a hundred thousand iniquities!

And class-names are worse still. They obliterate the individuals and present them only *en masse*. Once we have got used to thinking of men in groups, our scientific outlook brushes aside the components of the groups, and we are concerned with abstract averages and 'pointer-readings': We, then, become too busy with larger issues to think of individual suffering. The newspaper headlines tell us that a few thousand enemies have been killed as against a few hundred of our own soldiers. 'How brave are our men!' we cry out inwardly. And yet think of all this in terms of personal suffering, in terms of the pain inflicted, the mangled flesh, the wriggling limbs, the heart-rending wails, the ebbing life—and multiply that single suffering by those astronomical newspaper figures. What a difference does it make! And yet, this is not all. What a lot of human energy, mental power, creative genius, moral fervour, spiritual inspiration are lost for ever!

It will be useless to blame war alone for such an irrational state of things. Our whole cultural and spiritual outlook is to blame for that. We have deliberately engendered a myopic vision that cannot look beyond a strictly limited field, nor can it penetrate very deep. At most, the men of our own race we call our own—the others are somehow less than men, though through prudential considerations we call them so. This may be explained away as a very superficial outlook of the unscientific people, not shared by all, coloured as it is by race-prejudice, and blinded as it is by ignorance of history and geography and contemporary literature. But what about the estimation of a man's intrinsic worth by the scientific world? Does it take into consideration his whole being, his uttermost depth and his farthest expanse, his potential worth as well as his actual achievements, his past glory as well as his future promise? The answers given in different ages and by different sages are very various: oftener than not they are partial and do hardly any justice to man as he really is. Let us look at some of these answers.

II

According to Hobbes man is an irresponsible brute that has to be tamed and kept under control by social contracts. According to psycho-analysis man is moved by his unconscious, mostly sex, impulses—the conscious life being just a sort of window-dressing. Man is intrinsically bad (though such judgement of values are ruled out of court in psycho-analysis), the surface goodness that we see is achieved through sublimation and repression, or to put it more bluntly, by clogging the natural flow of human energy and digging artificial channels for it. And this gives rise to whirlpools, eddies, and washing away of embankments—a thousand and one social maladjustments and human suffering.

To thwart an instinctive drive, to stifle an unconscious desire is, Freud has taught, to injure the personality at its very roots (C.E.M. Joad, *Guide to Modern Thought*, p. 221). The higher activities of the human spirit are not enjoyed on merits; they are sops which man has invented to salve the instincts which have been wounded by his renunciation. . . . Conscience, as Freud puts it, is merely the result of instinctual renunciation (*Ibid.* p. 215).

Behaviourism, too, does not assign a very high place to man. He is just an automaton. The prevailing mechanistic outlook has reduced the master of machines to the level of machines! But if you protest too much against

this, psychology shows you up as a bundle of instincts of which intellect is just a handmaid:

> The instincts are the prime movers of all human activity; by the conative or impulsive force of some instinct every train of thought, however cold and passionless it may seem, is borne along towards its end . . . . all the complex intellectual apparatus of the most highly developed mind is but the instrument by which these impulses seek their satisfaction (McDougall's *Outlines of Psychology*, p. 218).

Biological thought has contributed not a little to man's degradation. According to it man has evolved from the lowest animate thing, which in its turn evolved from dead matter. Man has not consequently outstripped all the limitations of matter. In fact, there is hardly any such thing as soul. Intellect is just a glow of brain matter that illumines the modifications there—a kind of halo round the saint's head that has no existence apart from the head.

Those, however, who would not derive life from matter, but would give life an independent status, hardly go beyond life. According to them mind is only a derivative of life, the illumined and self-knowing side of vital energy.

Modern economists declare man as an economic being. He works out of consideration for loss and gain. Material welfare is his prime consideration, so that even though he has a mind (which the economists have no occasion to dispute about), it is of a very sordid kind indeed. Philanthropy, altruism, religion, and all such things can best be interpreted in terms of this economic drive.

This much about individual men. The second consideration is about men in the mass. Has man any existence, worth mentioning, apart from the society he lives in? The answer is by no means easy. Aristotle declared long ago that man is a social being. It is apparent that man builds and lives in society. But it is not equally clear if he has a moral and spiritual life apart from the social whole. Here we are faced with two opposing tendencies of thought. Nineteenth-century mechanistic thought had little place for free will. Though twentieth-century science has discovered that individual constituents of matter often behave in a way contrary to the mass, they have left out of consideration whether that implies the existence of a free will in the individuals. All that they affirm is that under the present state of scientific advance, the individual is of little importance in the physical world, the mass or average is all-important. Present-day thought being based on science, most people seem to be concerned with groups and races and nations. Individual lives seem to be of little consequence. Morality is, therefore, interpreted in terms of an intangible force that works in the mass. Marx emphasizes dialectical materialism, Toynbee interprets history as a series of challenges and responses, Bergson discovers the *elan vital* at work, and Jake Croce finds in history an unfolding of the spirit. Evidently the individuals are mere instruments in the hands of such world forces.

In factories men are but mere mill-hands—numbered and dovecoted according to the convenience of capitalists; in offices they are mere clerks grinding away at a common machine for a common purpose, apart from which they have no lives of their own; in the army they are mere generals, colonels, captains, and common soldiers —the rank and file; in economics and sociology they vanish away leaving only some statistical figures like the Cheshire cat disappearing but leaving behind its grin. We 'organize man-power', we enter a 'labour market', we call to the flag '1943 classes', we 'punish a race'—such is our language to express our present-day conceptions of human beings.

Scientific Europe was so obsessed with the mass idea a few years ago, that August Comte and his followers raised society to the status of God, and social service to the highest worship. Thereby they not only dethroned God

but also degraded man. A soulless philanthropy could neither inspire nor uplift.

III

So long as modern civilization looks at things from a wrong point of view, not much good can be expected out of it; nay, it may give entirely unsatisfactory results. What can a student of matter in motion contribute to the man who is charmed by beauty, enthralled by moral excellence, inspired by consideration of value, and enraptured by thoughts of God? The failure of modern civilization has been forcefully described and its root cause pointed out by Prof. J. T. Greig:

> The kind of civilization which the European man has built up for himself in the last 150 years, and which he has tried and is still trying, to impose upon the rest of the world, is a false civilization, a way of life that on the balance is more harmful than beneficial to mankind; or to put it in another way, that in the latter half of the eighteenth century, European man, led, I regret to say, by the British people, turned up a blind alley in pursuit of a will-o'-the-wisp called Power over Nature, and has been racing at a constantly accelerating speed along this blind alley ever since (*Our Changing World-view*, p. 95).

Fortunately for us, science is now gradually but surely changing its attitude, and there are scientists of outstanding eminence who no longer swear by the old scientific world-views. The position is thus summed up by General Smuts:

> We now see that even in physics the individual follows a different regime from the mass or the crowd, and we begin to understand that the sciences of life and especially of human behaviour may have to be very different both in categories and laws from the statistical physical sciences.

The net result of the changed outlook is that thinkers are now concentrating more on the individual, and penetrating deeper into the inner world. But to be successful in this pursuit we must change our methods entirely. Bergson did well to stress the importance of intuition, and Jeans and Eddington have rendered yeoman's service by stressing the need of approaching our problems from the side of mind and not from that of matter only. But these methods alone will not suffice to discover the true nature of man. For finding that we have to approach those who deal with fundamentals, and who instead of deriving truth from analysis and induction try to visualize it in its intrinsic totality. We must rekindle our light at their spiritual altar and relume the world with a Divine outlook. The mystics of all times and climes—the seers and prophets—have enunciated for us the truths as they were revealed to them. They can be relied on, for they did not care for 'Power over Nature', or discovery of laws to subserve human ends; but with non-attachment and discrimination they sank into their innermost being to realize what they really were—it was intrinsic truth and not extrinsic value that mattered with them. For the sake of convenience, however, we shall not here deal with the points of view of other religions, but shall confine ourselves to Hinduism alone.

The Dualistic schools of Hinduism conceive of man as an instrument in the hands of God. Some again call on God as Father, Mother, Lord, or Friend, etc. There are still others who regard the individual souls as parts of or emanations from the World Soul. Men are thus called in turn, 'sons of Immortality,' 'particles of spirit,' 'lesser souls', and so on. But the school of non-dualists go further and declare that the individual soul is in fact identical with the Cosmic Soul. This, however, is no intellectual conception, or flight of imagination, but a matter of experience attested to by a long line of mystics from time immemorial. We shall not busy ourselves here with a proof of such a position. All that matters for us here is that mystics who are known for their veracity and sincerity and who are engaged exclusively in the quest of truth, are unanimous on this point that man is not a mere bundle of flesh, life, and mind; he is really no other than

indestructible spirit. Some of these mystics may not go the whole length of identifying the individual with Brahman. None the less, man's position, according to them, is higher than the highest material, vital, mental, or intellectual entity. It is this that makes life, the expression of the spirit on the material plane, valuable and sacrosanct in the eyes of all religious people. The scriptures declare that birth as man is the highest stroke of fortune; and all religions are agreed that the taking of life is the worst sin, for that retards the achievement of unitive life, the supreme goal of mysticism.

While the credit for this raising of human life in the estimation of all goes to all the religions, it has to be admitted that the non-dualistic standpoint is unique and unsurpassable inasmuch as it has pushed the matter to its logical consequence and raised human dignity to the highest pitch. We shall not enter into vain metaphysical discussions as to whether non-dualism is tenable as a theory. Suffice it to say that it is based on experience, and it can lead to valuable deductions that society can ill afford to ignore. We repeat, the lives of saints make the ancient truths throb with life and add newer meanings to them. In recent times Shri Ramakrishna's life has given a new interpretation to this non-dualism and Divinity of man; and to this matter we now turn.

IV

Shri Ramakrishna's life is very valuable in that he not only realized the highest state, but came down to the relative plane at the behest of God to interpret that realization in terms of present-day life. He did much more than giving a clear demonstration of the real nature and potentialities of man, he chalked out a path for others to follow. After coming down from *nirvikalpa samâdhi* he declared that non-dualism is the highest state, and in his later life he showed what this spiritual orientation meant in daily life.

We read that once when there was discussion about charity Shri Ramakrishna first said that people should be merciful towards others. But he corrected himself at once and remarked that only God can be merciful; for us human beings it is blasphemous to assume an attitude of charity which implies ownership of property, a relationship of superiority and inferiority, for how can weak human beings own things which are God's and show mercy to others who are nothing but God in disguise? We can only worship Shiva in the form of *jivas* (individual souls). Here Shri Ramakrishna was at one with the Upanishadic saying:

जीवः शिवः शिवो जीवः स जीवः केवलः शिवः ।
* * * *
पाशबद्धस्तथा जीवः पाशमुक्तः सदाशिवः ॥

—Man is Shiva and Shiva is man; man is nothing but Shiva in His absolute state. . . . When there is bondage, there is man; but when bondage goes, man is nothing but immutable Shiva (*Skandopanishad*).

But Shri Ramakrishna did not stop with preaching only. He did what he preached. We read how near Baidyanath Dhama (Deoghar) he refused to proceed to the Shiva temple until and unless the poor people who gathered round him had been properly fed and clothed, and we recollect with awe and reverence a verse in the *Bhâgavata* (III. ix. 12):

नातिप्रसीदति तथोपचितोपचारै-
राराधितः सुरगणैर्हृदि बद्धकामैः ।
यत् सर्वभूतदययाऽसदलभ्ययैको
नानाजनेष्ववहितः सुहृदन्तरात्मा ॥

—The Indwelling Soul, who is one though residing in innumerable bodies, is not pleased so much with the worship rendered by gods who are full of desires, gorgeous though their worship be, as He is with that kindness to all beings which is not attainable by the wicked.

That this attitude of Shri Ramakrishna was not a result of temporary emotion, is borne out by similar incidents in his life. He worshipped others in his own way without consideration of caste, creed, or position in life.

Thus he fell prostrate before a sweeper woman carrying night-soil on her head, saying, 'Mother, it is Thou only that in this form can serve Thy sons!' With a dog he could eat thinking it no other than God Himself. At the sight of an Anglo-Indian boy standing under a tree he remembered Shri Krishna under the *Kadamba* tree and went into *samâdhi.* Innumerable are such instances which cannot all be treated here. But this leads us to another consideration. In what respect did he differ from philanthropists of a very emotional type? As already indicated, he was no mere theorist, but a man of realization, every moment of whose life gave eloquent evidence of inner change that had come to stay as a result of God-vision. His vision of Divinity in others was no frothy or showy sentimentalism surging up spasmodically. It was an unperturbable conviction and a permanent attitude that delighted in unruffled self-assurance. About his realization he said,

> Do you know what I see right now? I see that it is God Himself who has become all this. It seems to me that men and other living beings are made of leather, and that it is God Himself who, dwelling inside these leather cases moves the hands, the feet, the heads. I had a similar vision once before, when I saw houses, gardens, roads, men, cattle—all made of one Substance; it was as if they were all made of wax (*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, American edition, pp. 941—42).

Such realization of unity was so intense at times, that if anyone walked over the grass in the temple compound, he felt as though one were walking over his own chest. On another occasion when two boatmen quarrelled and one slapped the other, an eye-witness saw actual finger marks on Shri Ramakrishna's back.

Such is the background of philosophy and realization that adds a new meaning to human life. Man being Divine, nay, Divinity Itself though hidden under 'leathers', man's relation to man should be worshipful. Neighbourliness is good so far as it goes. Brotherhood is better still, though that too is bound to be strictly circumscribed, since one cannot find or recognize brothers outside one's family or group or community. 'Particles of spirit' give a higher and more comprehensive idea still; but that too does not go far enough, since there are particles and particles—big and small. 'Divinity of all men'—what a grand idea it is, what a plethora of possibilities is embedded in it, what an inspiring vision of future human achievements does it conjure up!

Man's position has improved step by step and human relationship has become sweeter and more equitable as each step forward was taken as a result of finding out newer truths about man's nature. Cultural contact has enriched man's life and forged stronger the ties of international friendship. The protest of socialism and capitalism has partly demolished the wall that kept the poorer classes out of the finer things of life. The discovery of the springs of human action has awakened sympathy for the poor, the wayward, the criminal. The spread of good literature has raised humanity intellectually and lightened the dark recesses of the heart. The triumph of religion has created ampler opportunities for a better life. The lives of mystics are still there to guide us like beacons. And the teachings of Shri Ramakrishna still vibrate with contagious spirituality to cement the bond of unity between man and man. We wait with bated breath. The moment is Divinely surcharged.

THE MYSTERIES OF YOGA

By Swami Pavitrananda

From very ancient times the general mass of the people in all countries have associated religion with mysteries, miracles, and supernatural phenomena. In early days people believed that evil spirits were the cause of all diseases, and priests were often summoned to exorcise the Devil. Even today there are persons everywhere who will seek the help of priests, *sannyâsins*, or Yogis for the cure of physical ailments. This practice is common not only among the ignorant, but extends to the educated classes. Even rationalists and those who are proud of their practical wisdom sometimes fall back on supernatural remedies as a last resort when all other efforts have failed. There is also a tendency, specially among the rich, to seek the advice of those professing religion on short-cuts to worldly success. Many of them visit *sâdhus* simply for the purpose of knowing, if possible, what further material rewards the future holds for them: to them, religion and astrology mean the same thing! In the West a large number of persons who are ignorant of the real conditions in India still think of Hinduism in terms of astrology or palmistry: for them every Indian they meet in a train or on board a ship is a potential fortune-teller! In the following passage Aldous Huxley, with his penetrating insight, gives the reason for the occurrence of this phenomenon throughout the ages:

> In the main, religion has always been concerned with the psychic world, and not directly with Reality and Eternity. The reason for this is simple. The search for Reality and Eternity imposes a discipline which a great majority of men and women are not prepared to undergo. At the same time it brings very few obvious rewards or concrete advantages to the searcher. Access to the psychic world can be attained without any painful 'dying to self'; and the exploitation of the forces existing in the infra-red and ultra-violet of our mental life frequently 'gets results' of the most spectacular nature—healings, prophetic insights, fulfilment of wishes and a whole host of those miraculous 'signs', for desiring which Jesus so roundly denounced the religious people of his time.

Is it, then, a matter for any wonder if there are adventurers everywhere ready to take advantage of this 'mystery-mongering' propensity of the majority of men and women? In almost every country these charlatans ply a flourishing trade in the name of religion. There is the story of the 'Swami' in a large American city who, among his various courses of instruction, advertised also 'Course of ten lessons for the attainment of Nirvana—Ten Dollars'! When upbraided by a fellow-Indian for practising such a hoax, the Swami tried to justify his action by saying that, after a long and fruitless search for an honest job, he had at last hit upon this device because he saw no harm in trading on the credulity of fools!

Deception of this kind has gone to the farthest limit in the case of Yoga—that much-abused aspect of Hindu mysticism. People have all sorts of queer ideas about Yoga. Not long ago a pompous-looking individual calling himself Professor of Yoga delivered a lecture at the Rotary Club of a leading city in India, during which he described Yoga as mainly the method of acquiring miraculous powers over the body. He illustrated his theme by the usual drinking of sulphuric acid, munching of glass, and swallowing of fire among other 'miracles'. The real *miracle*, however, was that, during the discussion which followed the 'learned' lecture no one in the audience which contained persons from all walks of life, had the thought of asking the 'fire-eating' professor what bearing all his talk and 'bag of tricks' had on the spiritual life!

Some persons go to the Himalayas in search of Yogis and Mahatmas, and come back terribly disappointed if they cannot meet even one who performed miracles. A few of these miracle-hunters, after repeated failures, turn bitter, and try to make dupes of others by writing sensational books on the secrets of Yoga, the hidden abodes of the Himalayas, and the like.

Being connected with an Ashrama in the Himalayas, the writer has had personal experience—at times amusing, and at times sad—of what strange ideas people sometimes have regarding Yogis and imaginary Mahatmas supposed to be living in the Himalayas. Not long ago an American wrote to ask if he could come to the Himalayas to practise Yoga. He was apparently disappointed when he received the reply that he could as well practise Yoga at home provided he developed faith in and devotion to God. This is a typical instance of an unfortunate attitude of mind wnich shows how uncommon is 'common sense' in religious matters. It may happen that sometimes a person in search of a miracle-worker deserves sympathy on account of some sudden calamity that has weakened his reasoning power; but there are others who seem deliberately to relinquish all claim to reason as soon as they speak of religion.

Those who have lived in the Himalayas for a long time but are honest, will admit that the mere proximity of those lofty mountains is not sufficient for the attainment of Yoga. No doubt the environment of the Himalayas offers many great advantages, but that alone is no guarantee for one's spiritual value for them. By seeking the recesses of the Himalayas one may get temporary peace or respite from the troubles of life, but the vagaries of the mind soon return and continue their old game. It is only by ceaseless struggle that one gets strength, and it is by dint of hard labour alone that success in spiritual life is achieved by the strong. Only a very few, however, are prepared to pay the heavy price demanded for such achievement : the rest are content to run after cheap and tawdry remedies or to waste their time in the search of occult methods and secret places.

What, then, is Yoga? What does it connote and what does it aim at? Yoga literally means 'connection' or 'union'. Philosophically, it means union with the Supreme Spirit. What unites us with the Supreme Spirit is Yoga. There is only 'One' in the universe : when seen through the prism of ignorance, 'It' appears to be many. Because of ignorance we feel ourselves separate from the Supreme Self, and from one another, and see an endless variety of things without their underlying unity. Here arises the trouble. Wherever there are two or more than two, there is the cause of fear, jealousy, hatred, competition, and consequently of human misery. When there is only one, who will fear whom, who will hate whom? All that we see in the universe is I, and I alone. I cannot even think, because the thinker and the thought are one and the same. When that state is attained, all human misery disappears.

Technically, the word 'Yoga' has been used to refer to the system of philosophy propounded by the sage Patanjali about the second century A.D.; but, in general, Yoga may be called a method by which one can remove 'ignorance', the cause of manifoldness, and thus attain union with the Supreme Self. Though there is only one Existence in the absolute sense, it is nevertheless a fact—as hard a fact as a piece of stone which we touch—that there is manifoldness in the universe. However much we may philosophize about the one Universal Existence, in actual life we suffer when our relations die, when we get disease or meet with disappointments. Sometimes even the trifle of an angry word which has no more significance than a puff of wind, upsets our balance of mind to such a degree that we suffer for days and months together. No amount of philosophy can remove this suffering unless it is accompanied

by practice based on the experience of those who have *found* Ultimate Reality or the Supreme Self. Yoga, therefore, accepts the life situation as we find it, and suggests methods by which we can transcend human limitations.

The dominant factors in our lives are feeling, thought, and action, the mind being the motivating force behind all. Because there is the feeling factor, we feel misery and run after pleasure. If we can control our feelings and emotions and give them the right direction, we can seek real happiness instead of sense pleasure, and thus attain that joy 'which passeth all understanding'.

The method by which we can attain such joy by turning all our emotions towards the Supreme Reality—in other words, attain union with God through devotion—is called *Bhakti-Yoga*. The method of discrimination by which we can realize our identity with the Ultimate Existence is called *Jnâna-Yoga* or the science of wisdom. The art of detachment by which we can govern all our activities so that we may not be entangled in the meshes of work, though we are engaged in it, is called *Karma-Yoga* or the science of work. Finally, the method by which we can control the mind itself, which is the cause of all our misery, is called *Râja-Yoga*.

It will thus be seen that there is no more 'mystery' in Yoga than what is embedded in the very existence of the Universe. It will also be found that the art and science of Yoga are processes which are intrinsically simple, clear, and straight-forward; although success in their application can be achieved only by hard labour, ceaseless struggle, and vigilant care. Persons with ulterior motives may make use of Yoga for unworthy purposes; but those who are genuine aspirants after the goal of union with the Ultimate Reality or Freedom from bondage will go straight for the mark, and not tarry on the way, lured by diversions like the hunt for supernatural phenomena or powers.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I

1029, 58th
18th July, 1900.

My dear Turiyananda,

Your letter reached me redirected. I only stayed in Detroit three days. It is frightfully hot here in New York. There was no Indian mail for you last week. I have not heard from Sister Nivedita yet.

Things are going on the same way with us. Nothing particular. Miss Muller cannot come till August. I shall not wait for her. I take the next train. Wait till it comes.

With love to Miss Broock.

Yours in the Lord,

VIVEKANANDA

P. S.: Kali went away about a week to the mountains. He cannot come back till September. I am all alone, roasting. I like it. Have you seen my friends? Give them my love.

V.

II

1029, 58th
New York, the 25th July, 1900.

Dear Turiyananda,

I received a letter from Mrs. Hansborough telling me of your visit to them. They like you immensely, and I am sure, you have found in them genuine, pure and absolutely unselfish friends.

I am starting for Paris tomorrow. Things all turned that way. Kali is not here, he is rather worried at my going away, but it has to be.

Address your next letter to me C/o Mr. Leggett, 6 Place des Etats Unis, Paris, France.

Give my love to Mrs. Wykoff, Hansborough and to Helen. Revive the clubs a bit and ask Mrs. Hansborough to collect the dues as they fall and send them to India. As Sarada writes they are having rather hard times. My kindest regards for Miss Broock. With all love.

Ever yours in the Lord,
VIVEKANANDA

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DIVINE LEELA

By Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee

I. Various Conceptions of the Absolute

It is well known to all students of philosophy and religion that human reason in its quest of the Absolute Truth has arrived at various conceptions and theories, and that no single conclusion is unanimously accepted by all systems of philosophy and religion as logically unassailable and spiritually perfect. Leaving aside the materialistic and the positivistic conceptions of Reality, which can in no way satisfy the rational and spiritual demands of human nature, even those who are definitely convinced that the Ultimate Ground of the universe is one non-dual Absolute *Spirit* fail to come to any agreement as to the true essential character of this Spirit. This Absolute Spirit is conceived by some as impersonal and by others as personal; by some as a pure self-luminous being without any power or attribute or activity, and by others as a perfectly self-conscious personality possessed of infinite power, all-excelling attributes, a creative will, and all-governing activity; by some as devoid of any self-expression or self-modification, and by others, as eternally expressing Himself in and transforming Himself into diverse orders of existences without losing His unity and transcendent consciousness; by some as unknown and unknowable, beyond thought and speech, beyond the reach of finite consciousness and understanding, and by others as one with whom direct spiritual intercourse is possible, who can be actually seen and heard and touched and talked to by devotees able to ascend to the spiritual plane of consciousness. Thus the Absolutists differ widely from one another in their conception of the Absolute, and every school has its logical and spiritual ground for its distinctive conception.

II. The Problem of Personality of the Absolute

One fundamental logical difficulty in Absolutist philosophy is with regard to the personality of the Absolute. Certain sections of the Absolutists, taking their stand on the principles of abstract logic, fail to reconcile the idea of the Absolute with the idea of personality. They think that the Absolute

Spirit, which must be above time and space, above relativity and conditionality, above all imperfection and limitation, cannot logically be conceived as a person. To them personality necessarily implies a consciousness of self as distinguished from and related to others, a free will to realize some unrealized ideal, a psycho-physical organism in which the self is embodied, and such other characteristics. All these are logically inconsistent with the idea of the *one without a second*. The Absolute must, therefore, be an impersonal being, a pure, self-existent, self-luminous entity, without any self-consciousness (as we understand it), without any freedom of will and action, without any physical, moral, or aesthetic qualities.

III. The Impersonal Absolute Cannot Account for the World-order

Such an impersonal Absolute Spirit cannot furnish any adequate causal explanation for the origin and development, order and adjustment, integration and disintegration, destruction and dissolution of the diverse orders of phenomena constituting the world of our experience. To be the sole cause of this world, the Spirit must have a creative will, an unlimited power, a supreme intelligence, a capacity for self-modification and self-diversification, without any injury to His unity. This would imply the idea of personality. Further, the cause must be related to the effect. The unrelated Absolute cannot be regarded as the cause of the world. Accordingly the advocates of the impersonal Absolute regard the world of phenomenal diversities as illusory, as an unreal appearance on the substratum of the infinite, eternal, changeless, self-luminous Reality. The Absolute Spirit is said to *appear* quite unaccountably as the world of plurality, and not to truly *create* it or *transform* Himself into it. But how can the Absolute Spirit *appear* falsely as a diversified material world and to whom should He *appear* as such? Illusion presupposes a *victim* as well as a *substratum*—a subject that is liable to error and is deceived by the false appearance as well as an object that is mistaken for something else, and perhaps also the existence of that something for which it is mistaken. This being the case, how can the Absolute One—the one to whom there is no other thing and no observer to be deluded—be the ground of any illusion? As the finite spirits have no independent existence before the supposed illusion, the Absolute cannot appear falsely to them. The Absolute Spirit, who is without any process of knowledge, cannot Himself be the victim of Illusion with regard to Himself. Who creates the illusion and upon whom does the illusion operate? This cannot be logically explained. The appearance of the Absolute Spirit as a plurality of finite spirits and a world of finite transitory phenomena experienced by them is, therefore, regarded as *inexplicable*.

But since the Absolute Spirit is conceived as the sole Reality, He Himself must be the cause of this appearance. If *mâyâ* or *ignorance* or whatever it may be called be the source of this illusory cosmic appearance, that source itself must pertain to or originate from the nature of the Absolute Spirit. It cannot be externally related to or associated with Him, for this would imply a duality, which is denied. Hence the Absolute Spirit, though above time and space, above all changes and relations and limitations, appears or manifests Himself as a plurality of finite spirits and an objective world of diversities by virtue of His own unique Power, which may be called *mâyâ*, and all the same He exists in His eternal transcendent consciousness. What is designated as *mâya* must from this viewpoint be regarded as the unique inscrutable Power of the Absolute Spirit, an aspect of His essential nature. Otherwise this *mâya*, the mother of illusions, would challenge the absolute non-duality of the Spirit.

IV. The Absolute Spirit Is the Sole Perfect Personality

Power, of course, has no existence apart from, or independent of, the nature of the spirit and must, therefore, logically be conceived as non-different from Him. All the appearances, being transformations of the Power, are essentially non-different from the Power and hence non-different from the spirit Himself. From this point of view the Absolute Spirit may be legitimately conceived as eternally existing by Himself in Himself, and for Himself. He has never become anything other than or altogether different from Himself. Nevertheless, His self-expression as a plurality of subjects and objects—as innumerable finite spirits and countless orders of finite relative objective realities—cannot be and ought not to be ignored or denied. The amazing vastness and complexity of this diversified universe, the wonderful adjustment and harmony and uniformity in it, the charming beauty and awe-inspiring sublimity of this cosmic order, the admirable contrivances for progress and development in each of the departments of this bewilderingly complicated system, the inscrutable design for the gradual self-realization of some supreme moral and spiritual ideal immanent in this system—all these point to the infinite energy, wisdom, goodness, majesty, and beauty of the supreme Power that has given birth to and is sustaining this world-system. This Power must be recognized as pertaining to the nature of the Absolute Spirit. The Absolute Spirit must, therefore, be conceived as the perfectly free, self-conscious and inexhaustible source of all energy and action, all wisdom and knowledge, all goodness and happiness, all love and beauty, all majesty and sublimity, that are and may possibly be exhibited in the nature of this beginningless and endless cosmic system.

The perfect transcendent unitary existence of the Absolute Spirit is the sole source and support and unifier of all finite relative transitory existences; His perfect, transcendent, dynamic self-consciousness eternally evolves from within itself and sustains the fundamental unity of all finite imperfect relative consciousnesses. All orders of phenomenal consciousnesses and all kinds of objects appearing to and disappearing from these consciousnesses are partial self-expressions, within the domain of time and space, of the eternal, infinite, absolute Existence-Consciousness-Bliss (*Sat-chid-ânanda*) which constitutes the essential nature of the 'One without a second'. It is of course with perfect freedom and perfect self-consciousness that He is so manifesting Himself into plurality and reducing the plurality into unity, because there is no other force to act upon Him. This indicates that He is a perfect personality, or rather the sole perfect person.

V. Leela Distinguished from Evolution, Emanation, and Action

This is the true conception of the Absolute Spirit—*Parama Brahman*—*Paramâtman*—according to the theistic schools in general, and the Vaishnava school in particular. Now, the perfectly free and delightful, sportive and artistic, self-expression of the One in the many, of the Infinite in the finite, of the Eternal in the temporal, of the Absolute in the relative, is called by the Vaishnava devotees His *Leelâ*. The term *Leelâ* has a special significance of its own. It is distinguished from natural evolution, from spontaneous emanation, from involuntary as well as voluntary action. The conceptions of evolution, emanation, and involuntary action are not consistent with the notions of perfect freedom and perfect self-consciousness, the essential characteristics of the Absolute Spirit. Evolution and emanation occur in accordance with some laws to which the source of evolution and emanation is *subject* and over which it has no control. They are not, as ordinarily understood, expressions of perfectly free self-conscious Existence. Moreover, evolution proceeds

from potentiality to actuality, from the most undeveloped state of existence to more and more developed states of existence, from the lowest order of being to higher and higher orders of beings. The governing principle of evolution is some power or ideal or law acting upon the nature of the thing, and not proceeding from the free will of the thing itself. The idea of emanation, though implying a notion of outflow of innate energy, is based on analogy with inanimate sources, in which the essential characteristics of Spirit, namely, freedom, self-consciousness and bliss, are absent. Hence the self-expression of the Supreme Spirit cannot be either of the nature of evolution or of the nature of emanation.

With regard to action, it is obvious that the Divine self-expression cannot be of the nature of involuntary action. Our involuntary actions are the indications of the imperfection of our free rational nature. In involuntary action it is forces extraneous to our self-conscious and self-determining spiritual nature that move us to action. It is because our entire nature is not spiritualized that there is room for such involuntary or other-determined action. In the perfectly spiritual Divine nature there is no possibility of actions of this kind. Thus we are led to the conclusion that all self-expressions of the Absolute Spirit must be perfectly voluntary, must be quite freely determined by Himself.

But we cannot draw any analogy between our voluntary action and that of the Absolute Spirit. Our will arises from our imperfection. It is some feeling of want or imperfection or discontent with the present state of things that generally gives rise to a desire for something which is expected to remove such feeling and produce a sense of relative satisfaction. The idea of the desirable object or unrealized ideal becomes the motive of our voluntary action. We never experience any volition, when we are fully satisfied with our present condition. The idea of voluntary action in the case of finite self-conscious and self-determining persons is always associated with that of an unattained desirable object, an unrealized ideal, an unaccomplished purpose.

VI. Divine Self-expression Conceived in the Light of Sport and Art

In the nature of the Absolute Spirit there can be no want, no sense of imperfection, no unrealized ideal, no feeling of discontent. He is in eternal bliss. He can have no motive to action, as we have. It is through voluntary action that we seek to rise from a lower plane of existence and consciousness to a higher plane, to shake off our bondage and limitation and to attain a state of greater freedom and self-fulfilment, to get rid of sorrows and imperfections and to enjoy the bliss of perfection. The Absolute Spirit cannot be actuated by any such motive, for He is eternally perfect, eternally blissful, eternally in the highest state of existence and consciousness. The suggestion that His love or mercy for His creatures is the motive of His action is of little worth, because there are no creatures before creation, because all creatures as such owe their existence to His creative action. Thus the question of the motive of His action, in the sense in which we ordinarily understand the term, cannot arise at all. But still the Absolute Spirit must be conceived as eternally active, for otherwise this beginningless universe of finite spirits and diverse orders of existences could not have originated or appeared at all. Even if this universe be regarded as having only an apparent or illusory existence, its appearance must be due to some form of action on the part of the Absolute Spirit, it must be thought of as some mode of His self-expression.

What then can be the character of this creative self-expression of the Absolute? We can form a consistent idea of the nature of His self-expression on the analogy of sport and art. A true

sportsman and a true artist give expression to their inner joy and beauty and power and skill in various outward forms with perfect freedom and self-consciousness, without any motive, without any sense of want or imperfection, without any concern about consequences. A true sportsman finds joy in the play itself. All the harmonious and beautiful movements of his limbs flow almost effortlessly from the fulness of his heart in course of the play. The plan and design, the order and adjustment, the regularity and uniformity, the skill and dexterity that are remarkable in each of his operations, are the spontaneous expressions of his developed self-consciousness and perfect mastery over his movements. It is not an unrealized ideal that he seeks to realize by dint of his sportive actions, but it is an ideal which he has already realized within himself that he finds joy in exhibiting in diverse forms in his outer movements. A true sportsman thus becomes a creator of beauty and he imports his own inner joy into the hearts of the spectators. A true artist's action also is of similar nature. He creates works of art not from any motive. He acts with free will and self-consciousness; there is no compulsion or constraint in his creative work; there is no calculation of gain or loss in it. He freely and consciously expresses himself in his artistic works. The ideal realized in his inner consciousness he freely gives expression to in an orderly series of words and sounds, or lines and colours, or figures and movements, or some other diversified forms. His aesthetic consciousness is embodied in his artistic productions. When a true musician sings or plays on his instruments, when a true painter draws beautiful pictures, when a sculptor brings out enchanting figures from rough stone or metal or wood or clay, it is always some ideal realized and enjoyed within that is partially embodied in outer forms.

In such cases we find a type of actions, which are essentially distinct from our ordinary voluntary actions, but in which, nevertheless, there is manifestation of free will, dynamic consciousness, creative genius, wisdom and knowledge, power and skill, all these being merged in or unified with a sense of inner joy and beauty. According to the *Leelâ-vâdins* actions of this type may give us a clue, however imperfect, to the nature of the Divine self-expression.

VII. The Absolute Spirit Alone Is the Absolutely Perfect Artist and Sportsman

It can be easily understood that an absolutely perfect artist or sportsman is not to be found in the imperfect human world. By a perfect artist is meant one whose entire nature is artistic, in whose body, senses, feeling, knowledge, and will the highest ideal of beauty is perfectly realized and all whose thoughts, emotions, and actions are diversified self-expressions of this beauty. He may be described as *Rasarâja*—Beauty personified or as self-conscious and self-determining Beauty. Whatever he perceives is beautiful; whatever he thinks is beautiful; whatever he does is beautiful. He has not to overcome any obstacle, either from within or from without, and for that reason has not to make any effort at all, in the creation of beauties, in giving expression to his inner beauty in diverse outer forms. His power to give such expression to himself is without any limitation, without any resisting force, without any dependence upon external conditions, materials, or instruments. There is no motive exercising any influence upon any of his movements, except that of freely enjoying the beauty realized in his own nature in a variety of objective forms. Since the beauty realized in his transcendent consciousness is above all conditions and limitations; it cannot be exhaustively expressed in any limited number of phenomenal objective forms. Hence newer and newer forms of beauty should be created every moment, and his will and power for such creation

should never in course of time be exhausted. This is what is meant by the highest perfection of an artist's life, and this perfection is not evidently realizable by any finite creature, whose life is conditioned by various forms and elements of Nature.

It is equally plain that the highest ideal of sportsmanship is not realizable in the worldly life of an imperfect human being. No man can possibly convert his entire life into a life of pure play. The human life is a life of wants and desires and voluntary efforts. Play occupies a small corner in the worldly life of a man. He wants to live and prosper. He requires food and drink, clothing and shelter, comfort and happiness. He has ambition for name and fame, power and authority, learning and greatness. As a moral being he distinguishes between good and evil, and his life is a life of duties, obligations, and responsibilities. He has to struggle for existence and for meeting the demands of his nature. Competition, rivalry, and hostility surround him. How much leisure and opportunity has he for pure play? Play requires freedom from wants and desires, freedom from struggles and hostilities, freedom from ambitions and depressions, freedom from weakness and fatigue. It requires perfact fulness of heart and mind, perfect ease and peace within and without. Play should be spontaneous, though voluntary, expression of the inner joy. A worldly man can only temporarily enjoy this blissful state of existence, and it is only during this short period that he becomes a sportsman in the true sense of the term.

The life of an ideally perfect artist and sportsman is the highest fulfilment of our phenomenal life—the ideal perfection of the life of knowledge and action and enjoyment. In such a life there should be no want to be removed, no desire to be satisfied, no unattained truth or good or happiness to be attained, no resistance to be overcome, no disharmony to be harmonized. All the departments of such a life should be converted into perfect beauty and bliss. All the self-expressions of such a life should be absolutely free manifestations of a life of beauty and bliss. It is self-enjoyment that should assume diversified forms in the actions of such an ideally perfect artist and sportsman. His actions should be creative and voluntary, but should involve no motive or effort. The extent of his knowledge and wisdom and his power and resources may be dimly estimated from their manifestation in the effects of his artistic and playful actions; but in his own consciousness all his knowledge, wisdom, power, and resources are resolved into perfect beauty and bliss. He inwardly dwells in the realm of his own self-enjoyment, while his enjoyment manifests itself in a variety of outward forms, which on analysis indicate the knowledge, wisdom, power, and resources unified and beautified in his blissful nature.

This ideal is, according to the view we are presenting, eternally and infinitely realized in the life of the Absolute Spirit who is the ultimate ground of this universe. This Absolute Person is the most perfect sportsman and artist. The structure of this universe indicates that He is omnipotent and omniscient, that He is eternally endowed with infinite creative power and knowledge. But in His transcendent spiritual nature all His power and knowledge are resolved into beauty and bliss. His infinite and eternal, self-existent, self-conscious, and self-determined life is a life of perfect self-enjoyment, of ceaseless play with self, and of free and continuous self-expression in creative activity. In His creation of this beginningless and endless cosmic order He is not actuated by any motive, He is not under any necessity or compulsion or obligation, He is not goaded on to it by any power or force or principle operating either within Himself or outside Himself, nor is He merely a passive witness to or inert substratum of some self-evolving process of Nature or some illusory self-

modification of an inscrutable entity like *mâyâ* or ignorance. Being absolutely perfect, being eternally at the highest state of self-realization, He is eternally enjoying the perfection of His nature, and as such He is eternally playing with Himself. His play is creative. He is playing with and enjoying His infinite knowledge, His infinite power, His infinite beauty and sublimity, His infinite purity and goodness, His infinite self-conscious and self-determining existence. This eternal sportive self-enjoyment of the Absolute Spirit leads to His creative self-expression, and this is called His *Leelâ*.

(*To be concluded*)

UNIVERSITY REFORMS

By Mrs. Swarnaprabha Sen

No one can deny today that the Indian universities, established by the middle of the nineteenth century, have been on the whole an influence for the good. They were justly made welcome at the start, and they have been regarded with enthusiasm. But this enthusiasm was not blind, it was tempered with criticism.

We find some signs of discontent about the end of the nineteenth century, and people with a critical mind noticed the lack of depth in the university education and absence of life and inspiration among its scholars. The critics raised a cry against the general habit of cramming for examination, the system of examination which entailed greater scope for memory work than for training the higher faculties of imagination and understanding. The number of graduates and young undergraduates was mounting up every year; but with all due deference to their 'brilliant' results, it must be said that they were fit for few openings, and, so far as the concerns of life went, the university education was practically useless to them. They had no initiative and could not be expected to launch out new ventures.

So much for the brilliant products of the university education; but what about the ordinary run of students? Were they fit for the struggle for existence with their poor and deficient knowledge of literature and utter ignorance of any practical work? Heavily handicapped by their defective knowledge of English, they were misfits in the school, the college, and, later, in the work-field of life. The state of things grew so bad that at last it succeeded in catching the eye of observers, and there was a cry to raise the standard of the Entrance Examination and thus maintain a higher standard in the High Schools. The people perfectly shared in these views of the authorities, and the years between 1901 and 1906 were full of various attempts at reform. Educational workers who were really interested in the welfare of students, had come out with proposals for a change; the demand for a 'constitutional reform' was made by the people, by the professors and principals of some colleges, and had the support of the authorities. As a result of repeated agitations, Lord Curzon appointed the India Universities Commission, which published its report in June 1902. The Commission was initiated at the instance of the Bengal Government; but when the members set about their enquiries, they recommended similar reforms for other universities as well. Courses of study, examinations, the form of the constitution of a college, the minimum rate of fees to be charged, were among the things discussed about which reforms

were suggested. All the recommendations of the Commission did not meet with public approval and some had to be dropped.

The Governor General lent his assent to the recommendations in 1904—the constitution of the university was moulded in a new cast. The university administration was re-organized, syndicates and senates began to function in the office of the administration of the university. They prepared a new set of rules, and these revised rules and regulations were approved by the Government of India and were brought into effect in 1906. It marked the beginning of a new order of things in the history of the university.

The new regulations were for raising the general tone of education in colleges and High Schools, which were to be provided with better staff, more suitable buildings and other necessary equipments. Closer attention was to be paid to the conditions under which students live and work. Government recognized the need of spending more money 'on higher education'. Better staff and efficient work implied an increase in the number and the scale of pay. Affiliation to the university would be refused if the conditions regarding staff and equipment were not fulfilled. The syndicate, it was thought, thus could control the teaching in the colleges, and the university could assume teaching functions within limited means. In short, the new Act made the control and supervision of the Government over the university more direct and effective than ever—almost every detail of the university work being brought under Government supervision. It was an implicit suggestion that the teachers should be paid in a way which would enable them to maintain a status equal to that of their equals in other avenues of social life. This was the first time that the economic side of education was taken into consideration.

One of the marked changes recommended by the Commission was its attitude towards the teaching of science which had so long been subject to sinful neglect. Full advantage of this departure in the course of studies, however, has not been taken till recent years. Otherwise we ought to have seen more definite and practical results in the field of science—leading in a surer and firmer way to the industrial progress of the country. Only the recent changes in the regulations of the university relating to the Matriculation Examination show a recognition of the need of including science in the curriculum.

The University Act of 1906 aimed at placing the work of education on a higher plane by bringing the 'best intellects' into the service of education and asking the people to co-operate with the university authorities. The 'best intellects' would naturally raise the standard of teaching. The need of improvement of the standard of English at the Matriculation Examination was strongly felt as an inevitable means of improving the standard in the college. The efficiency of the teaching in all institutions depends to an extent on the number of students—and the Act suggested a higher scale of fees in order to restrict the large number of admissions into some colleges. All these point to the fact that the Act had in view a higher standard of university education.

The diffusion of knowledge and learning on a broader scale is no less important in the general scheme of education, and educationists have never lost sight of that. The subject of popular education, more specifically called the primary education, had attracted notice even before the middle of the nineteenth century. Raja Rammohan Roy felt the need of improvement of the native population, and not merely of the 'learned natives'; the Despatch of 1854 declared that the policy of the Government was to take special care of the primary education and even today the general cry is 'Literacy for the Masses'.

But the University Act, concerned as it was for the higher education of the

country, laid great stress on High Schools and colleges, and ignored the claim of the general people to receiving education.

Improvement in the university education depended a great deal on the education imparted in the High Schools, specially as regards the English language. College education cannot be effective if the background of school education is not exactly what is desired. High Schools have consequently received a great deal of attention under the new regulations. Inspectors were to insist not only on the observance of university rules and regulations but also on the other, and more important, conditions of equipment and standard of teaching. New methods of teaching, the Direct Method being one of them, were introduced about this time and we find 'Training Schools for Teachers' coming into existence.

One of the effects of the university reform seems to be the allocation of definite places to different types of schools. Each type has its special function, but the aim of all these types should be to prepare the student for life, and make him a complete man. Higher education is not for all—it is surely for the limited few and the schools, therefore, need not be a stepping stone to the college. There has been in India a muddle of matters in this respect—practical training and vocational education have been sadly neglected, whereas the standard of efficiency in special teaching has suffered by a false sense of inferiority. The various kinds of schools have only lost in quality in their attempts to rise to the standard of High Schools and colleges.

The expansion of post-graduate teaching by the university is one of the great achievements of the reforms of 1904-6. So long the traditions of the university were for the affiliating and examining type of institutions, and it was held that the university had no business directly to meddle in teaching of students. According to all progressive standards, however, the university is something quite different from this. The university proper should be a place of learning where scholars work in comradeship for the training of men and the advancement of knowledge.[1]

But the principle that the university ought to be a teaching body was adopted only in a timid and halting way, and in a form which drew an unfortunate distinction between the university and its constituent colleges. No attempt was made to work out a sort of synthesis of university and colleges, wherein each should help and supplement the other. The idea was mooted, but not elaborated.

To put in a nut-shell, the progress so far achieved amounted to this: The Indian Universities Act of 1857 established the Universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay for the purpose of examining students in different branches of art, literature, and science, and awarding academical degrees and distinctions to them. The Punjab and the Allahabad Universities, incorporated later, in 1882 and 1887, were also purely examining bodies. As has been stated before, the model which the creators of the Act had before them was the London University. It was the University Act of 1904 that enabled the universities in India to make provision for teaching, to appoint university lecturers and professors, to solve problems relating to students, and to arrange about their own equipment necessary for study and research. An important reform introduced by the Act of 1906 was the teaching of science in the Calcutta and other Universities.

But the results we have noted were not up to the expectation, and there was controversy as to the relation between the universities and their constituent colleges, the organization of courses of study, and the system of education which was held responsible for so much unemployment. In 1910 education was transferred from the

[1] *Commission Report*, p. 76.

Home Department of the Government of India to a new Department of Education, Health, and Lands, and during the years 1911 and 1912 we find Government disbursing a large amount of money for educational purposes.

In 1918 the policy was revised and it was decided to have a separate university for each of the leading provinces of India, and secondly to create new local universities of teaching and residential type. The Benares Hindu University was the first of this type to spring into existence. This university, founded entirely for the Hindus, and the Aligarh University, catering exclusively to the educational needs of the Muslims, are based on communal or religious divisions. Both are under the Central Government and receive grants from it, but princely donations from rich benefactors have been their mainstay.

The Calcutta University Commission was appointed in 1917 principally to inquire into the affairs of the Calcutta University, but incidentally also into other educational problems. Sir Michael Sadler was the chairman and the members included men like Sir Asutosh Mukherji, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed, Dr. Gregory, Sir P. J. Hartog, and Prof. Ramsay Muir. The Commission recommended the immediate establishment of a new university at Dacca and gradual development of a similar type in other places. The other recommendations were :

(*a*) separation of the Intermediate Colleges from the university, and placing them under a Board;

(*b*) the differentiation between the academic and administrative functions of the university; and

(*c*) the constitution of a Board to supervise the work of the colleges in mofussils.

The Calcutta University Commission of 1917 also criticised the 'affiliating system of the university' and strongly advocated 'the founding of the unitary type of university'. To the latter type belong the Universities of Dacca, Delhi, Lucknow, Annamalai, Mysore, Hyderabad, Allahabad, Benares, Aligarh, while Bombay, Calcutta, Punjab, Patna, and Nagpur are of the affiliating type.

The largest university of the affiliating type is the Calcutta University, which is also a teaching one. The University Act of 1904 had already empowered it to make suitable provision for the instruction of the students. The College of Science and the Post-Graduate Department in Arts have been functioning, and the number of students receiving training and instruction have not been discouraging, but the University has been criticised for a lack of quality in the teaching and for being unable to secure suitable employments for its graduates.

Though on account of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms the University could not immediately carry out the recommendations of the Commission, they came in for a good deal of attention in the other provinces. The number of universities increased from 5 in 1917 to 14 in 1922. Among the new universities we have to mention the Patna University (1917); the Nagpur University (1923); the Andhra University (1926); the Agra University (1927); the Muslim University, Aligarh (1920); the Rangoon University (1920); the Lucknow University (1920); and the Annamalai University (1929).

Indian education became a 'Provincial transferred' subject under the Constitutional Reforms in 1921, and was placed in charge of a Minister responsible to provincial legislature. He is assisted by a Director of Public Instruction, who administers education and advises on technical points, assisted by an inspecting staff helping to carry on the Provincial Government's policy, particularly with regard to primary education, and to control the public funds and prevent wastage. Thus the Government of India has ceased to have any direct control over education. This (it is supposed) has led to the development of initiative in the people; educa-

tional questions have been brought into closer contact with public opinion, and much unnecessary delay in referring all questions to a distant authority has been avoided.

But the Government of India had foreseen an 'undue growth of provincial exclusiveness in educational matters'[2] and desired to take part in educational discussions and to assist provincial Government by clearing difficulties. A central Advisory Board of Education was, therefore, established in 1921 with this object in view. The Board was to offer expert advice and keep Provincial Governments in touch with one another. This Board was abolished in 1923, was revived in 1935 when need was felt again for its existence as a clearing house of ideas and a reservoir of information. It has set up four standing committees :—(1) Women's Education Committee, (2) Secondary Education Committee, (3) Vernacular Education Committee, and (4) Vocational and Professional Education Committee.

The Board thus revived met for the first time in December 1935 and recommended a wholesale reconstruction of school education. The school course was to be divided into definite branches and to be provided with opportunities for vocational and practical occupations to students who were inclined that way.

Persons of wide educational experience were invited to help the Boards with ideas in regard to educational reconstruction. The Wood-Abbott Scheme was the result of the findings of Messrs. S. H. Wood, M.C., Director of Intelligence, Board of Education, England; and A. Abbott, C. B. E., formerly Chief Inspector of Technical Schools, Board of Education, England. They made investigations all over India and submitted their report under the title of *Vocational Education in India with a section on General Education and Administration.* The reforms suggested have not yet been carried out; but there are possibilities of a radical transformation. It is expected to cope with the problem of unemployment among the educated and 'prevent the waste of money and talent caused by want of suitable education'. It is as the Commissioner of Education associated with this Board again that Mr. John Sargent has brought forward his important post-war educational plans which are now before the public.

That the public are aroused not only to a sense of political and national consciousness but are roused to an 'educational consciousness' and are taking a keen interest in the policy and administration of educational matters is evident from the increasingly large number of resolutions on education put up before the Central Legislature. There is a persistent cry or dissatisfaction at the present system of education and questions on education referred to problems like illiteracy in India, unemployment, the introduction of compulsory primary education, backwardness of female education, spread of education among depressed classes, and so on. The same interest in matters educational has also been shown by provincial legislatures. The Bengal legislature in particular has been discussing questions such as the absence of adequate provision for vocational education, the undue encouragement given to the purely literary type of education, the unsatisfactory nature of the present dual control of secondary education, the need for reforming the constitution of the Calcutta University, the delay in enforcing the provisions of the Bengal Rural Primary Education Act of 1930, adequate provision for the education of the scheduled castes, deprovincialization of Government schools and colleges, and the inadequacy of Government grant to the Calcutta University, etc., etc.

The period between 1910 to 1935 may be described as a period of general awakening in India, specially to the necessity of a comprehensive and wide expansion of the system of primary

[2] Eleventh *Quinquennial Review*, p. 125.

education. The Government of India Act of 1919 put forward a scheme by which India was gradually to attain a due share in her own Government. And people realized the need for education among the masses in order to make them proper citizens. Various Provincial Governments vested the Local Bodies, the Municipalities, and District Boards with authority to spread free and compulsory primary education among the masses.

Madras seems to be the foremost province in providing primary schools, and next comes Bombay. The condition of Bengal is very poor—only 8 per cent attained an elementary literacy. The Calcutta Corporation have been spending an annual sum of about a lac of rupees for the privately managed primary schools within Calcutta. The Calcutta Municipal Act of 1923 has not yet been of much help in introducing an extensive scheme of universal primary education. The Bengal Rural Primary Education Act was passed in 1930. The Punjab and the United Provinces have been more successful with their Primary Education Bills where compulsion has been introduced in many rural areas.

What has been given above is an outline in brief of the history of the introduction of English education in India; the progress upto the present time has been traced. The percentage of total population receiving instruction in recognized institutions was 4.9 in 1937; compared with other countries, it is disgracefully low. The *Eleventh Quinquennial Review on the Progress of Education in India, 1932-37*, shows that both from the point of view of numbers and the amount of money spent on them, the progress achieved has been very inadequate. Financial depression has been urged as one of the reasons for the unfavourable results. There have been signs of slackening of the pace of expansion.

The great hopes of progress and the possibility of re-orientation in educational matters entertained by ministers under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms have not been realized. It will be illuminating to quote from the Editorial Notes in the *Modern Review* of June 1940:

> It is true that the financial stress which set in almost simultaneously with the introduction of the Montagu Constitution continued up to practically the end of the Quinquennial under review. An examination of the figures relating percentage of Government expenditure to the total budget expenditure, however, indicates in our view, complete failure, on the part of the authorities, to realise the imperative needs of education in any scheme of future progress. As educational advance is the basis of all progress, strenuous and ceaseless efforts are needed to remove the educational backwardness of the people of the country, and if this is to be accomplished, the needs of education require satisfaction before everything else.

Interest has of late been drawn to adult education which is a vital problem for India. It is next to impossible to attain to any degree of self-government with such a vast portion of the population weighed down by illiteracy, unable to exercise their own rights and use their votes intelligently. After a century of Western education we find that the educated classes have done very little for the education of the masses, either for children or for the adults. The Bombay Adult Education Committee has been carrying out systematic experiments to spread literacy among mill-hands. In May 1939, as many as 10,783 men and women attended Adult Literacy Classes. Madras also has started schools for workmen, young as well as old. Night schools have been opened in many provinces by philanthropic workers. In Bengal the Central Adult Education Committee was to work Adult Education Centres and to find out means suitable for the 'improvement of grown-up villagers in Bengal'.

The Linlithgow Commission was of opinion that adult education should be undertaken by the public who will be more efficient for the purpose and should not be controlled by the State. The Commission was of opinion that the thing required for the spread of adult

literacy was not so much money as public interest and private initiative. Local and District Boards could, however, always make moderate grants out of their funds for rural improvement of this nature.

But while voluntary effort should be encouraged, Government should also launch on a systematic campaign. A proper series of adult literature is to be produced, travelling libraries are needed. Both voluntary and paid teachers are to be procured.

The Calcutta University had been doing its mite towards a literacy campaign, though the scope of direct action was barred out by the very nature of the thing. Students appearing at the university examinations were organized into groups, reminded of their duty by their illiterate brothers and sisters, and sent out into villages to work during the long months intervening between their examination and the next college session. The students organized *kathakatâ* parties, *jâtrâs*, *kirtans*, short outdoor lectures, and informal conferences, and they included the acting of a small playlet in their programme. The programme was getting popular and it was hoped that a large band of sincere workers would turn up from among the villagers to carry out the task of promoting literacy among the masses in the villages. But the enthusiasm was short-lived and organization could not be effective.

Of course, literacy is only the minimum of adult education. The real object of adult education should be to give the adult villager an insight into the happenings of the world, teach him to appreciate the pure joy of a free and happy life, from which he has been so long excluded.

Allied to this movement for the liquidation of illiteracy, there is the demand and the sanction for adoption of the vernacular as the medium of instruction. Accepted as the ultimate medium everywhere and almost at every stage of the progress of Western education in India, it has so long been regularly relegated to a secondary position, English occupying the major one. But the University of Calcutta—which had allowed scope for composition in the vernacular as an optional subject at the beginning of the century; which had made it a compulsory subject since 1909 for Matriculation, Intermediate, and B.A. Examinations; which had carefully prepared the course for M.A. Examination in modern Indian languages (not Bengali only) since 1920; which had sanctioned the use of Bengali as the language in which thesis for the P. R. Studentship and the Doctorate could be submitted—has at last logically made the mother-tongue the medium of instruction in the school stage. This indicates a radical change in the educational outlook of the authorities; and it is bound to bring in results which will be commensurate with the efforts made, efforts that could not function so well as long as English was the medium. This was a much-needed reform which has been carried out, but the results of which have yet to be felt and measured.

TRANCE, SAMADHI AND VISIONS

By Swami Saradananda

III

We have already explained in brief what is meant by Kundali or Kundalini Shakti (coiled up energy). The very vigorous impulse which persists in the body in the form of subtle physical impressions of the mental modifications and experiences that are happening in the present life or took place in past lives, is called by that name by sages

like Patanjali. According to Yogis, this Kundalini remains in a total or partially dormant or unmanifested state in individuals under bondage. It is due to this potentiality that the individuals have recollection and imagination. If she is somehow fully awakened or manifested, she prompts the individuals to attain perfect knowledge and have God-realization. If it is asked, How can recollection or imagination arise from Kundalini when she is dormant?—our answer is that, though she is dormant, she gets momentary consciousness, in a way not unlike the spontaneous striking of a mosquito or scratching of the bitten part by a man in sleep, through the action of external sights and tastes, etc., which reach the brain through the organs.

The Yogis say that the Cosmic Soul or God who is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute resides in the orifice or space in the brain called the *Brahmarandhra* (or the space of Brahman). The Kundalini Shakti has a special affinity for Him, or God ever attracts Her. But being asleep the Kundalini Shakti does not feel that pull. No sooner is she awakened, than she feels that Divine adduction, and approaches Him. Her path of approach in this manner is already in existence in our bodies. There is a passage from the brain right through the backbone to its end where there is the *mulâdhâra* or the *meruchakra*. This is the path called *sushumnâ* in the scriptures on Yoga. Western physiologists call it the *Canal Centralis*, but they have not been able so far to discover its need or utility. In the beginning, the Kundalini being separated from God, had come down through that channel to *mulâdhâra* and fallen asleep. Again proceeding up through this channel she will penetrate one by one the six plexuses, and reach the brain. As the awakened Kundalini proceeds from one *chakra* to another, the individual has a newer kind of experience; and in this way when she is at the brain a man reaches the acme of religious experience where he is unified with God who is the 'cause of all causes'. At that stage man has the highest ecstasy, he reaches that state of absorption which is beyond all modifications, and which is the source of all mental states and attitudes.[1]

The Master used to explain these intricate Yogic affairs in his very simple way. He said, 'Look, something proceeds apace from the feet to the brain! So long as it does not reach the brain, I have consciousness, but no sooner does it reach the brain, I am completely lost to this world—then there is no seeing and no hearing, leave alone talking to others! And who will speak, when the consciousness of "I" and "You" has ceased? I want to tell you everything—I wish, I can tell you all the visions I have when that thing moves up. So long as that thing has proceeded only up to this or to this (showing his heart and throat) there is possibility of communication, and I do talk; but when it goes over this (showing his throat), somebody seems to dumbfound me and I cannot talk, I am lost to the world!—I cannot control myself! Whenever in my attempt to narrate the visions that I have when it goes above this (showing his throat), I think of those visions, the mind rushes up at a bound—and I can speak no more.'

Many a time has the Master tried his utmost sufficiently to control himself to narrate the visions that are vouchsafed to him when the mind transcends the plane of throat, but alas, how often has he failed! One of our friends says, 'One day he declared very emphatically, "Today I will tell you everything

[1] In the scriptures on Yoga the regions of these six *chakras* in the spinal column are mentioned *seriatim*: (1) At the lowest extremity of the spinal column is the *mulâdhâra*, (2) above it at the base of the genital organ is the *svâdhishthâna*, (3) above that near the navel is the *manipura*, (4) over which at the region of the heart is the *anâhata*, (5) above that at the throat is the *vishuddha*, (6) over which between the eyebrows is the *âjnâ*. Of course, all these six *chakras*, are in the *Canal Centralis*. It is to be understood, however, that by the words heart, throat, etc., are meant the regions in the backbone opposite them.

—I shall keep back nothing;" and he began. He described all the planes up to the heart and the throat, and then pointing the space between the eyebrows he said, "When the mind reaches here, man gets God-vision and he falls into a trance. Only a thin screen then separates the Cosmic Soul and the individual soul. His experience then is like this—." With this he attempted to describe in full his God-vision when he fell into a trance. At the end of this trance he attempted again, but the same thing occurred. When this had happened several times, he said with tears in his eyes, "My dear ones, on my part, I want to communicate everything, yea, even without hiding a jot or tittle from you; but Mother does not allow me to speak at all, She makes me speechless!" Wonder-struck we thought, "What is this! It is evident that he is making every attempt to speak; nay, he is suffering from his failures; but he does not succeed at all. The Mother must be very perverse indeed! He wants to communicate a good message—to describe his God-realization. What fun is there, then, to muzzle him like this!" We did not realize, then, that mind and intellect, by means of which one can communicate, cannot reach far enough; and complete God-realization cannot be had unless one goes beyond their highest flight. How could we understand then, that through love for us the Master was trying to make the impossible possible?'

The different forms that Kundalini assumes when moving up through the *sushumnâ* used to be described more in details by the Master thus: 'Mind you, my child, that something which rushes to the head does not always move in the same manner. The scriptures speak of five kinds of its movements, e.g., ant-like motion—just as the ants march softly in a line with food in their mouths, so I feel a tingling sensation in my feet which proceeds gradually upwards to the head, when I enter into a trance. Frog-like motion—just as the frogs make a few leaps at a time and then stop, and then make a few more jumps, similarly I can feel that something is proceeding in little and intermittent jumps, from the feet to the head; no sooner is it at the head than comes trance. Snake-like motion—the snakes lie down straight or in coils, and as soon as they espy a prey in front or take fright, they writhe and run; similarly that thing crawls along and proceeds to the head, when I get *samâdhi*. Bird-like motion—when the birds change their perch, they suddenly take to their wings and now and then dart up or dart down but do not rest anywhere till they have reached the new goal; similarly that thing goes to the head and trance comes in. Monkey-like motion—monkeys jump from one branch to another with a hoop, and reach their goal at two or three bounds; similarly I can perceive that thing proceeding up to the head at two or three jumps, and then follows *samâdhi*.'

As for the visions which he had in the different planes when the Kundalini Shakti moved up along the *sushumnâ* channel, the Master said, 'In Vedanta they speak of the seven planes of consciousness. One gets a different kind of vision in each of these planes. The mind naturally moves up and down in the three planes—its natural proclivity is for eating, drinking, and sense-enjoyment, etc. If it can transcend those three planes and reach the heart, it has a vision of aura. But even though the mind reaches the heart, it sometimes goes to the three lower planes. If anyone's mind should go above the heart to the throat, one can no more talk of things other than Divine, as for instance of worldly affairs. It so happened to me then, that if anybody talked of worldly things, I felt like being cudgelled on the head; I used to run away to the Panchavati where I would no more hear such talk. I hid myself at the sight of worldly people. My relatives appeared to me as wells—I felt as though they were dragging me down to those wells;

there would be no coming up if I once fell there. I felt suffocated, as though life would depart, and I felt restless till I left that place. Even after rising to the throat the mind may come down to the three lowest planes, so there is still need for caution. If after that the mind should transcend that stage and reach the eye-brows, there is no fear of a lapse again—then there is vision of God and constant ecstasy. Between this stage and the *sahasrâra* (the thousand-petalled lotus in the brain) there is just a screen, transparent like glass. God is so near then (i.e., at the sixth stage) that one feels as though merged in Him, as though unified with Him, though unity is still to be achieved. If the mind should come down from this plane, it can come down at most to the throat or the heart—it cannot go further down. Those who are of the human class (the *jivakotis*) do not descend from here—after continuous stay of twenty-one days in this plane that obstruction or screen is removed and they merge in God for ever. To get immersed in the Deity through and through in the seventh plane in the *sahasrâra* is what is meant by rising to the seventh plane.'

When the Master talked on such Vedic and Vedantic matters or on such secrets of Yoga or realization, some one among us would ask him, 'Sir, you never cared for learning. How do you then know all this?' But this strange Master was not offended even by such a strange question. He would answer with a smile, 'I may not have read myself, but have I not heard a lot? I remember all that. I have heard the Vedas and Vedantas, the philosophies and Purânas from others—from erudite scholars. After hearing all that and collecting all the good materials, I have strung them into a garland for my neck, and then I have offered everything to the lotus feet of the Mother with this prayer: "Take Thou here Thy scriptures and Thy Purânas; give me only pure devotion." '

About the non-dualistic realization of Vedanta or the state beyond all the states he said, 'That is the last word. To explain, there is a very old servant. The master is very pleased with him and has absolute confidence in him. He consults him at every turn. One day the Master is so pleased that he takes the servant by the hand and wants to place him on his own cushion. Embarrassed, the servant blurts out: "What's that you are up to?" Unmindful of his protest, the master forces him to the cushion and says, "Never mind, sit down! You are one with me!" It is just like this.'

One of our friends (Swami Turiyananda) was once deeply drawn to Vedantic studies when the Master was still in flesh and loved him because of his lifelong celibacy, devotion, and steadfastness, etc. Being merged in Vedantic studies and meditation and prayer etc., the friend could not for a time visit the Master as frequently as he used to. This did not escape the Master's vigilance. Once finding alone a devotee who generally accompanied that friend, the Master asked him, 'Hullo, my child, why are you alone, why has he not come?' The man addressed to replied, 'Sir, he is deeply engrossed nowadays in Vedanta; day in, day out, he is deep in study and discussion. It may be that he has not turned up lest he should waste his time.' At this the Master kept silent.

A few days later, the friend of whom we are writing came to Dakshineswar to visit the Master. On seeing him the Master said, 'Hullo, are you really very much engrossed nowadays in Vedantic thought? Well, that is excellent. But does all this thought amount to anything more than the formula: "Brahman is real, and all else is unreal"?'

The friend, 'Yes, sir, what else can it be?' The friend confided, 'With those words that day the Master seemed to have fully opened my eyes to the real import of Vedanta.' At those words he was made to think in surprise, 'Yes, really, if one can grasp the significance

of those words, he has understood all that Vedanta implies!'

The Master: '*Shravana* (hearing), then *manana* (reflection), and finally *nididhyâsana* (constant meditation). First you hear, "Brahman is real, all else is unreal;" then comes reflection through which you make that truth firm in your mind; lastly comes constant meditation when you give up the unreal world and concentrate your mind on Reality which is Brahman—this is all. If, on the contrary, you hear and understand but cannot give up that which is unreal—then what good will come out of all this? That is like the knowledge of worldly people—that cannot lead you to Reality. You must have conviction and renunciation—then will that fructify. Otherwise, though you may go on repeating: "There's no thorn, no pricking," as soon as you put your hand on a thorn, it at once gets pricked and you cry out in agony! You declare that the world does not exist—it is unreal, Brahman alone is real; but as soon as things of enjoyment of this world like beautiful sights or tasteful dishes come to you, you take them to be true and fall into their snares. There came once a mendicant to the Panchavati. He used to wax eloquent when talking Vedanta to people. Then I heard one day that he had some improper relation with a woman. Now, once, as I went that side to answer calls of nature, I found him sitting there. I said, "You talk so much Vedanta, what's all this then?" The man replied, "What of that? I shall explain to you that it all means nothing. If the world is unreal for all times, how can that alone be true? That too is unreal?" I got annoyed at that answer and said, "I shall not touch this Vedanta of yours with a pair of tongs." All that is the kind of knowledge the worldly people, the people running after enjoyment, have.'

The friend says that the conversation ended there that day. The Master told him all this when loitering under the Panchavati. Before this the friend thought that Vedanta could not be understood, and liberation was consequently out of the question, unless one studied such difficult books as the Upanishads, the *Panchadashi*, and had proficiency in the Sankhya and Nyaya systems of philosophy. From the Master's talk that day he felt convinced that all the Vedantic discussion aims only at fixing that one idea on the mind. All the study of philosophies and works on dialectics is useless unless the conviction 'Brahman is real and everything else is unreal', dawns on the mind. He took leave of the Master that day, and returned to Calcutta with the determination that thenceforth he would devote more time to meditation and spiritual practices than to study. Resolving thus to realize God through practice, he bent all his energies to that end.

Whenever the Master came to any house in Calcutta, the news would soon reach his devotees. Not that some people specially worked for this by going round and spreading the news everywhere. But the minds of devotees were naturally eager to be with him, and if by chance they failed to visit Dakshineswar, they felt so delighted to make compensation by visiting each other and talking about the Master, that if anyone among them somehow got news of the Master's coming, it spread spontaneously in a trice among a good many by word of mouth. It is difficult to impress on the reader how closely the devotees were knit together through the influence of the Master. Most of the disciples of the Master lived in the Baghbazar, Simla, and Ahiritola quarters of Calcutta, hence the Master most often came to these three quarters. Of these again, Baghbazar had the greatest number of visits.

Some time after the above incident the Master one day came to the house of the late Balaram Bose of Baghbazar. Many of the disciples of Baghbazar, who came to know of this, gathered in his house. Our friend lived near by. As

the Master made enquiries about him, a young man went to his house and brought him to the Master. The friend reached the big hall on the first floor of Balaram Bose's house and finding the Master seated there among the disciples, he saluted and sat by him. The Master after exchanging a few words of greeting turned to the topic under discussion.

From the trend of the talk the friend realized that the Master was explaining to the audience how without God's grace nothing could succeed—be it knowledge, devotion, or philosophy. It struck him as though the Master was pursuing that topic that day with a view to removing his own mistaken conception. It seemed as though everything spoken by the Master was addressed to him.

He heard the Master say, 'To explain, is it so easy to realize fully the unreality of greed and passion, to believe with heart and soul that the world is unreal in all times (past, present, or future)? How can it be achieved without His grace? If through His mercy He vouchsafes such a conviction, then only is it possible. Otherwise how can man grasp that through his personal effort? What does his worth really count for? And how far can he struggle with his own energy?' As this talk on God's grace proceeded Shri Ramakrishna entered into a trance. After a while, coming down a little to the conscious plane, he continued, 'One cannot realize one thing, and yet one wants more!' With this he began singing, even while in that state of ecstasy:

> O, Kushi and Lava, of what are you proud?
> Can you catch me unless I allow myself to be caught?

The song was accompanied with so much tear that a portion of the sheet covering the Master's seat became wet. Our friend, too, was deeply touched by that strange lesson and shed uncontrolled tears. After a long while both of them regained normal consciousness. Our friend says, 'That lesson is for ever emblazoned on my heart. From that day I realized that nothing can be achieved without God's grace.'

SOME PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SHRI RAMAKRISHNA'S LIFE*

By Swami Sharvananda

As a man, as an individual, you and I are all confronted with all the responsibilities of life. Being placed in the midst of the complexities of society how can we ennoble ourselves, how can we raise ourselves from the position of stagnation and from this life of misery and decadence as we now find ourselves in? How is life again to become a beacon light for us to take us over to the goal of all lives which is the destiny of all humanity? From this purely practical, individualistic standpoint I shall try to place before you a few lessons that I have learnt from Shri Ramakrishna's great life.

The first lesson that Shri Ramakrishna teaches us all is that man lives and has his being in God; ordinarily we feel that we are living in this material world, enjoying all the sense objects, but truly man's life is deeply rooted to some Divine principle, and the more he feels so, the better for him. Shri Ramakrishna, if anything, was a God-intoxicated man. His whole life was saturated with that one consciousness, the Divine consciousness, and he re-

*Speech delivered in the 109th Birthday Anniversary of Bhagavân Shri Ramakrishna at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, on 19 March 1944.

peatedly told us that the goal of human life is God-realization. Whether he wills or not, man perforce by the law of his being, must realize God. But by God do you suppose or think that he meant as if some ultra-cosmic being sat in some ethereal region manipulating the affairs of the world? No. By God he meant the Divine consciousness of life that is all-pervasive, that is pulsating in every living creature; even the lowliest of the lowly is instilled with that Divine instinct. You know of the wonderful vision he had. Once he went to worship mother Kâli. What is that he saw there? The whole temple, the shrine, the Divine image, the utensils and vessels, and even a little cat that was there in the room, were all saturated with that Divine instinct,—with that Divine principle *Chaitanya*. He went into the garden. He saw the wonderful vision that even the blade of grass under his feet was instinct with that *Chaitanya*. There was not even a grain of sand that was devoid of that wonderful Divine consciousness; and from that day onward he gave up external worship. He began to feel as he used to say, 'As a fish lives in the midst of water, so I feel that all human beings are like fish living in the *Chit Samudra*, in the ocean of *Chaitanya*, the ocean of the Divine Being.' So that is the first lesson that he asks us to learn from his life and from his teachings, that every man must begin to feel from the moment he hears of Shri Ramakrishna's life and teachings that God is not in some ultra-cosmic region; God is not only in the temple or Church or Mosque, but He is in man and around him. 'I am like a cup immersed in water. Inside is the Divine Essence, and outside is that same Divine Principle.'

Of course, we have first of all to start with faith, with belief in his great teachings. But if you are sceptic, if you are in doubt about the teachings of his life, like a student of science, you must be prepared to do the experimentation. As the adage goes, the test of the pudding is in the eating; so you have to taste and test whether this is true or not. Thousands of saints and sages have verified this truth by their life; and so you, too, should go and verify; and here are Shri Ramakrishna and his disciples who showed to the world that in this practical world, conscious world, it is possible to realize this. And so have faith, have courage, and proceed on.

The next idea naturally arises—an idea which we all feel in our heart of hearts—is how to realize it and what is the consequence of that realization. Are we not all seeking peace? Are we not all seeking light and knowledge? The search of the human soul is peace, wisdom, and knowledge, and our *Shrutis* say that the nature, *Svarupa*, of God is this : He is *Ânanda-svarupa* and *Jnâna-svarupa;* and the realization of God means attainment of infinite peace, infinite bliss, infinite knowledge. There is only one way to reach that goal to satisfy the eternal quest of our soul. The only way to realize this is to feel that there is Divinity in our soul and that our soul is potentially Divine. Humanly speaking, we had our birth and we may die. Physically speaking, we may have our limitations, we may have our shortcomings, we may have our weakness. But when we try to study the question from this standpoint of Ultimate Reality, all this appear to be mere delusions or dreams. If we begin to feel that the truth of our life lies in our Divinity, that the soul is deeply rooted in the Divine consciousness, then a peculiar strength will arise in our heart and we will feel that we are able to move the world. Such a great power will surge in our heart: we will feel that we are able to do what even the mightiest of the mighty could do or has done in the past. That self-consciousness, and self-respect will be raised in our soul. In India today particularly we Indians need this very great message. We are today living crushed under foreign heels. We are suffering

innumerable sufferings and miseries because we have lost that self-respect. We have lost the spirit of self-reliance. So we have allowed ourselves to become beggars or productive machines to be exploited to the utmost extent. The other day in Bengal why did millions of people die of starvation when the whole of India bore the insult calmly? Why, I ask, did not the blood boil? Because the spirit of self-respect has been banished from the Indian heart and so we bore meekly the insults like living corpses—yes, we have become like living corpses. That is why we could not move to rectify that wrong as we ought to have done. The reasons are want of self-respect and self-reliance and absence of the feeling of the Divinity of the soul. So you see, friends, the greatest need of ours today is to revive in us that feeling of Divinity of the soul, that reliance in the infinite potentiality of the soul. When will we be able to feel that? If we try, if we make a real effort to do what we think best and what ought to be done, then we can do it. That is the second lesson that we learn from Shri Ramakrishna. The moment Shri Ramakrishna found out that the realization of God is the greatest thing to be achieved in life, is the only worthy achievement, he sacrificed everything, hearth and home, joys of life and the pleasures of senses; even his physical body he was ready to sacrifice for the sake of realization of this goal. So that iron determination, that strong will, is necessary. That is one thing that Shri Ramakrishna has taught to the modern generation.

How to make the will strong? Implement the strongest weapon that man can possess for the achievement of the glories of life. If we want to reach, to rise to, the pinnacle of human glory, we must make our will strong; and as modern psychologists say, making the will strong is developing the consciousness that we are able to realize our wishes, our desires, if we want to. First, there arises the desire, and then the desire is transformed into will: when the desire is supported by the conviction that it is possible for us to realize what we desire, the realization soon follows. We desire to have Swaraj for instance. We desire that we could banish all our miseries and wants from our society. Should this desire be transformed into will and should we know that we can realize this desire, we can banish all miseries. And here is Shri Ramakrishna teaching us the lesson that it is possible to realize what we desire. When the desire becomes strong and is added to the conviction of the spirituality of the soul, the infinite Divinity of the soul, it is transformed into the conviction that it is possible to realize the end desired. Desire is then changed into will. This will is strengthened by concentration or *Dhyâna*. You know that sometimes we Indians are even called men of weak will, and we all see that we are like Duryodhana saying, 'I know what is right, but I cannot do it. I know what is wrong, but I cannot refrain from doing it.' That is, therefore, the test of a weak will—knowing what is right, we cannot do it; and knowing what is wrong, we cannot help doing it. But this weakness can be removed by one way, the way of *Dhyâna*, meditation, concentration, pinning the mind to the goal. If we can concentrate our minds upon the goal, bringing all the forces of mind to be fixed upon that one single point, then we will see how day by day our will becomes strengthened with all powers. Your will will become so strong as to cleave through huge mountain-like obstacles. Do not we see the example of Mahatma Gandhi? A small shrivelled man, see how he can move the whole world! Why? Because of his strong will. If you ask me, Wherein lies the greatness of Mahatma Gandhi? I would at once say, character and strength of will, manifestation of the strength of his will. If you have a will, it must express itself in character. So a strong will is necessary. That is the second point that we learn from Shri

Ramakrishna. We know how when he wanted to achieve his ideal he used to become mad with that idea of the realization of that ideal.

You know, however, that will can never remain strong without purity and without truth. And that is another thing that Shri Ramakrishna showed us during his lifetime; life has to be pure, cleansed of all sensual yearnings—pure of all faults and also it has to be sincere. Unless life is purified of its impurities, unless man purifies his mind and thought from all desires, will can never become strong, character can never become developed. So in order to purify the mind, the mind has to be fixed upon God-consciousness. There are two psychological methods of purifying the mind. Suppose you are accustomed to speaking lies. If you say, I will not speak lies, you will not escape from speaking lies. That is the negative way. But just try the positive way. Speak the truth, and the lying habit will disappear. So if you try to purify your mind by throwing away one after another the impurities from your thoughts, you will not succeed. Fix your mind upon God-consciousness and all the impurities of the mind will dissolve away. That is another very practical and positive lesson which we learn from Shri Ramakrishna: purify your mind through God-consciousness.

The fourth lesson which is equally important is truthfulness. Be true because God is Truth, and if you put faith in truth, nothing can daunt you and nothing will fail you. So, friends, these are the most practical points that we gain from his life. Of course there are various other aspects. But these four are the most important in brief. If we follow these, every man and child, whether he be in a humble position in life or on a high pedestal of social estimation, in every station of life, he will be benefited by it. It does not require expense, it does not require any study even, not much of education, but only will and desire; and the desire can be developed into will. If we follow these four chief lessons from Shri Ramakrishna's life, then not only will we improve the position of our entire national life, we will also change the face of the world. Today some of the speakers told you the world is torn by strifes and hatred and miseries of life and man has been the worst sinner against humanity, and they are thinking of post-war peace. But so long as man lives in the animal world, so long as man counts upon the material values of life, truly that permanent peace, which is a Divine Principle, which is a spiritual entity can never be realized. True and permanent peace, as the Purânas say, is possible when this world is inhabited by one race, Brâhmanas, and all become Brâhmanas. Then only there can be permanent peace. And who is a true Brâhmana? One who is a *tapodhana*, one whose life is spent in *tapas*, in self-mortification and self-reliance. When every one tries to subjugate the lower physical self in love and manifest the Divine Self, then we will be strong: then there will be no war—so say our Purânic sages. When you see the same *tapas* permeating everywhere, when we see the same *tapas* speaking through so many mouths, then there is no chance of any hatred, no chance of any grief or misery. Then all are united by love. And this is another great lesson that we learn from Shri Ramakrishna's life.

His life was a perpetual spring of love and perennial fountain of *kripâ*, of mercy, and of love. Everyone is drawn to him by that unspeakable, undefinable force of attraction that is love, because God is love. That is the surest test of a man of God-realization. A man of God-realization becomes the embodiment of love. The more you approach God, the more the Divine Light unfolds Itself within your heart, the more your heart will be filled with love for all. Swami Vivekananda, just before going to America, when asked by someone while he was at Bombay, 'What is your opinion of religion now?' said, 'Well, I don't know what is your religion, nor do I care to know what you mean by

religion, but one thing I must say, and that is this, I feel, I feel, I feel for all.' That feeling for all is the crucial test of spirituality; and the more spiritual you become, the more ennobled you become, the more enlightened with that light you become, the more your heart will be filled with love. Then you would feel for all; and that is the permanent basis of peace.

SAMAVEDA—A NOTE

PROF. JAGADISH CHANDRA MITRA, M.A.

There is no denying the fact that the liturgical text of the *Sâmaveda* consisting of the two *Ârchikas*, together with a whole host of highly laboured appendages such as the *aranya-gâna*, *grâma-geya-gâna*, *uha-gâna*, and *uhya-gâna*, has been subjected to a paradox that is discernible even to a casual student of the Brâhmanic culture. The composition and setting of this *Samhitâ* is peculiar in reality, though not the only text of its kind. No doubt it has been highly eulogized in the pages of the age-old receptacles of the Brâhmanic culture like the *Mahâbhârata*, but at the same time it has been denounced even within the range of the religious literature of the Hindus, and that in the most opprobrious terms imaginable. How can we expect to account for these contradictions? What should be the mode of approach to the question? Let us try here to give a summary treatment of what appears to be a reasonable problem.

We at the outset deem it proper to refer to the theory of sacrifice as promulgated by the Vedic Aryans who stood by the multifarious cults of worship like those of the fire, honey, *soma*, etc., of which the last-named one obtained a thorough treatment at the hands of the Brâhmana theologians in its most complex detail. The *Shrauta Soma* sacrifice is associated with the *Sâmaveda*, a fact which admits of easy corroboration : we need not harp on the issue any further than to point out that a considerable portion of this Veda is formed by the hymns and stanzas and triplets devoted to Soma, the plant-god, and a most part of the Veda is traceable to the much earlier *Samhitâ*, the *Rigveda*. As the *Shrauta* sacrifice *par excellence* is the *Soma* sacrifice, and as that has formed the setting of the *Sâma-samhitâ*, it has been fortunate enough as to have occupied an envious position of superiority as is evinced by the *Mahâbhârata* passages.

Really speaking, the theory and practice of music which is at present appreciated on account of its aesthetic appeal bore a magical property in them from the primitive and pre-historic times. Now, the very foundation of the sacrificial creed is magic—magic of similarity or of contagion; it serves as an inducement for the gods invoked, nay, it compels them, too, to do good in exchange of the offerings done unto them. An inconceivable extension of this was secured through the development of the theories of the *sâmans* ('melodies') and the injunctions of the *sâman*-literature are beset with immense practical difficulties which are surmountable only by the *bona fide* adepts in the art of Vedic rituals. It will not do simply to enjoy the *mâdhurya* (sweetness) of tunes but we are required also to see through the basic theories of the *sâman* schools, the inscrutable sacrificial potentiality of such tunes in that the 'target'-god of these must of necessity yield to the dictates of the sacrificer and minister to his mundane needs. The ritualistic argument, then, evidently supports the cause of the *Sâmaveda* and accounts

for its supreme status as is suggested by such statements, as 'वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि' (Gita, X. 22).

But one should not expect to find anything systematic and satisfactory to the modern scientific and psychological requirements in the old traditional treatises of Indian literature. Even in these days of the triumphal march of science we cannot expect to witness an unrivalled progress of rationalism and logicalness; rationalism and occultism are found to rule the society side by side. So, if we once find the *Sâmaveda* to have been pushed up to the summit of glory by tradition, we also must be prepared to see it rot uncared for in the abyss of denunciation by the same tradition; the tradition of India has honoured it, the self-same tradition of India has also dishonoured it. But why? The reason is not very far to seek. It is a known fact among the students of the Vedic literature that ours was then a religion tinged with, and enlarged by, a good number of the hieratic cults diffused throughout the country. The magical association, be it benign (*atharvan*) or malevolent (*angiras*) in its nature, was the object of inglorious dealing at the puritanic hands of a considerable section of the society and, as a result, this *Samhitâ* fell down from the esteemed position which it once enjoyed. It is known that the usual manner of enumeration of the four *Samhitâs* is as follows: *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sâmaveda*, and *Atharvaveda*, wherein we find the *Sâman* to precede the *Atharvan*. But instances are not unavailable where just the reverse is the case.[1] This betrays the downfall of this *Samhitâ* in the estimation of the higher stratum of society.

That the *Sâmaveda* was considered as impure (अशुचि), is because this dignified section wanted to avoid contamination with a magic cult which is essentially popular in origin. Manu comes forward with an argument stating that the *Sâmaveda* belongs to the Pitris (IV. 124) and the *Mârkandeyapurâna* (CII. 119) connects this Veda with the Rudras; and because this *Samhitâ* is connected somehow with these, it is looked down upon as impure according to the two authorities that seem to have recorded the voice of a by-gone as well as a living tradition. Of course the causal link might also have been inverted: they might have thus associated the *Sâmaveda* with the two group-divinities, acting in the wide-spread spirit that was responsible for its censure, that because it was अशुचि, it could be brought under the vassalage of either of the two: the Pitris and the Rudras.

Now, a sober and closer scrutiny would set at naught the theory fabricated on flimsy grounds that the *Sâmaveda* belongs to these deities, inasmuch as there is nothing very particular about this Veda that may be put forth in support of the assumption. But nevertheless this serves a definite purpose and we at this point take the opportunity of digressing a bit.

Those who are conversant with the development of the Greek theology know that there are two types of the Greek divinities: (1) *Theoi* (parallel to Skt. *Deva*, the invited ones), and (2) *Theoi-apopompaioi* (i.e. the gods of aversion). These two sets were worshipped differently, the sacrificial codes being differently framed for them. The conception of the second category bears an unmistakable stamp of the hieratic religion and the set of the *Apopompaioi* was feared rather than

[1] *Taittiriya Brâhmana*, III. xii. 9.1, reads: अथर्वणामङ्गिरसां प्रतीची, साम्नामुदीची महती दिगुच्यते। *Shânkhyâyana Shrauta Sutra*, XVI. ii. 2: ऋचो वेदो यजुर्वेदोऽथर्ववेद आङ्गिरसो वेदः सर्पविद्या रक्षोविद्या असुरविद्ये तिहासवेदः पुराणवेदः सामवेदः। Cf. also *Âshvalâyana Shrauta Sutra*, X. vii. 1; *Shatapatha Brâhmana*, XIII. iv. 3.8. It is significant that the *Sâmaveda* comes at the end of a series where we find also सर्पविद्या, रक्षोविद्या, etc., which are decidedly popular.

loved and honoured. By an interesting coincidence this very classification of the deities (?) has an exact parallelism in our *Shrauta* ritualism. The deities who move in multitudes (*gana* or *vrâta*) are the *Theoi-apopompaioi* of the Indo-Aryans. They were only to be placated and appeased constantly. In short, the Vedic gods might as well have been classified into (1) *Deva*, and (2) *Rudra*, precisely like the Greek gods as above. The second class which may be conceived as including the Maruts, the Rudras, the Vishve-devas, and the Pitris, *inter alia*, are to be placated by the people hankering after welfare of various denominations. Offerings to them are, interesting it is to note, not to be made into the fire which is reserved for the *Devas*, but to be thrown away, occasionally into a ditch one cubit deep as is recorded by the ritualistic tradition of the Taittiriyakas. The Rudras and the Pitris together with the Rakshas, Asuras, Yâtudhânas, etc., represent the malevolent aspect of Nature and are in all plausibility borrowed in essence from the folk elements.[2]

After this much of sidetracking let us advert to our point at issue. The *Sâmaveda*, borrowing much from the popular cults, was viewed upon as being impure as we have stated above. This conception of impurity was pushed forward to such an extent that the sound of the *sâman*-chanting turned by degrees to be a potent cause leading to the interruption of the Vedic study (*anadhyâya*). Apart from the verse of Manu, IV. 128, we have got yet another passage at the *Âpastamba Dharma Sutra*, I. iii. 10. 19, which jumbles up the following conditions together as effecting the postponement of the Vedic study: the barking of a dog, the braying of an ass, the cry of a wolf or a jackal, the hooting of an owl, the sound of a musical instrument, the weeping (of anybody), and the chanting of the *sâmans*. Into what a low pit from what a height! The braying of an ass in particular coalesced together with the chanting of a *sâman* melody!

When we think of the popular origin of the magical songs, we cannot help connecting the *Sâmaveda* with the *Angiras* portion of the *Atharvaveda;* and, as such, both are equally denounced when compared with the two *Samhitâs*, the *Rigveda* and the *Yajurveda*, of which the former aims at establishing an enduring relationship with the gods through a series of fervent prayers welling up from within, and the latter, at coercing them through the potential engine of sacerdotalism. One may argue, however, that as all the three *Samhitâs* noted above deal with the same *Shrauta* sacrifice in its different aspects and processes, no such differentiation could have been made regarding them as demanded by the logical sequence. But to us appears to be responsible for the odds the very fundamental characteristic of the *Sâmaveda* in that its content is required to be sung only and songs (and instruments, too,) being primarily linked up with the popular and magic conceptions (and herein the crux of the problem lies), the *Sâma-samhitâ* has been bearing an indelible mark of ignominy alongside its place of glory. As for the contradictory nature involved in the conception, we have already accounted for it beforehand.

[2] But a word of explanation here. We have made above the Pitris line up with the Rudras only from a practical point of view. In reality they cannot reasonably be grouped in this manner. Rather, to be precise, it should be assumed that they occupy a half-way-house between the Rudras and the Devas, having an inclination for the former. It is not an easy matter to ascertain their real nature. It may be pointed out here that the Avesti scholars have also failed in their attempt to state satisfactorily what the *Fravasis* of the Iranians are who are somewhat similar to the Pitris (that are *marginal* beings as such) of the Indo-Aryans in their human-*cum*-divine character.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

The Mysticism of Yoga is a chapter from Swami Pavitrananda's book on Yoga. He deals with the subject from the commonsense point of view, since common sense is often wanting in those who dabble in Yoga. ...Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee makes an interesting and illuminating contribution to the subject of *Leelâ*, which is topical in view of the ensuing Janmâshtami celebrations in August....Swami Sharvananda's speech on *Some Practical Aspects of Ramakrishna's Life* is timely and full of practical hints which are worth preserving....*Sâmaveda—A Note* really answers the *Query* on the subject published in these pages in April.

Christian Missionaries in India

Recently the conversion into Christianity of two pupils of the Sophia College, Bombay, focussed the attention of non-Christians on the much-debated problem of religious conversion carried on by missionary institutions in India. It has acted as a reminder to Hindus to put their own house in order, and to give serious thought to the matter of social and religious liberty, neglect of which has been the cause of many leaving the Hindu fold. In a letter to the *Indian Social Reformer*, Mr. H. A. Townsley, a Methodist missionary, working in India, writing in support of proselytization, asks,

> Doesn't it seem a bit amiss then, for followers of Him to give an undertaking that, yes, we will teach your children arts and sciences, but we won't influence you to accept Christian truth? What is the value of Christian virtue in a professor if not to influence the student towards the sacrificial service, vicarious suffering, the mightiness of meekness, the prize of peace?

and adds,

> If any Christian teacher can teach these truths without presenting the One who embodied them, and does, he is not only losing a grand opportunity of making his abstract teaching concrete, but he is definitely failing to present the *motive power* which Jesus envisaged to carry on his programme.

Good advocates always present the most favourable side. But in religious discussions we should be more honest. Let us face facts squarely. As men are different, even so are there different religions. The Hindu needs his religion even as the Christian needs his own. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the fact remains that the methods adopted to make Christian converts are often deplorable, if not absurd. Christian missionaries have been instrumental in vilifying the religion of the Hindus and ridiculing their time-honoured customs and practices. Missionary propaganda has worked for the disruption of the organic life of the Hindus. Fantastic ideas concerning Hindu society are spread abroad by foreign missionaries, most of whom live secluded, away from the heart of the people, and ignorant of the social and religious traditions of those among whom they are sent to work. These foreign friends (?) of India will do well to remember the words of Swami Vivekananda addressed to them:

> If, foreign friends, you come with genuine sympathy to help and not to destroy, godspeed to you. But if by abuses incessantly hurled against the head of a prostrate race in season and out of season, you mean the triumphant assertion of the moral superiority of your own nation, let me tell you plainly, if such a comparison be instituted with any amount of justice, the Hindu will be found a head and shoulders above all other nations in the world as a moral race.

Honest Christians feel that nothing is achieved by condemnation or ridicule of other faiths. Those who demand religious freedom to preach the Gospel deny to others that freedom (to follow their own faith) when they baptize non-Christians through persuasion, vilification, temptation, or persecution. It is

heartening to find that the National Christian Council of India clearly lays down the following concerning religious conversion of individuals:

> In pleading for freedom to commend the Gospel to all, we disavow any methods of propaganda which would endanger public order or cause scandal or unnecessary offence. We disapprove all methods of propaganda which hold out material advantage as a motive for conversion. Furthermore, though conversion does increase the number of Christians, and such increase may strengthen the political influence of the Christian community, we disavow any desire for such influence as a motive for religious propaganda. It is not our wish that Christians as a community should seek political influence for themselves; it is rather our wish that they should form a Church intent only on obeying the will of God.

The Council is of the opinion that the Church should teach religion to Christian children in educational institutions, and that it should receive into its membership those who from sincere and honest motives desire to join it *of their own accord* (italics ours). It is very desirable that missionaries in India should carry these principles into practice in all sincerity.

To the Hindu Jesus Christ is the embodiment of renunciation and spirituality. Therefore, Christian missionaries, who are looked upon as the loving interpreters of Christ to India, will be expected to demonstrate in their own life those ideals for which Christ stood. It is evident from the present war that the West is yet to understand and practise the teachings of Christ, though Western missionaries are anxious to preach those teachings to non-Christians. If Christianity in India worked more for social integration than for the reverse, and its votaries related their efforts to the regeneration of the country along the channels of her own thoughts and customs, then the Christian ideal might be demonstrated successfully in a way acceptable to Indians.

A Scientist's View of India

The present war and the recent famine have revealed a deplorable state of affairs in the country. India is found to be far below the required standard in industrial development, scientific research, food production, nutrition, and other matters. Some time ago a group of industrialists formulated a huge plan, at a cost of ten thousand crores of rupees, for the economic development of the country, and expressed their opinion that a national Government was necessary so that the plan could materialize. Prof. A. V. Hill of the Royal Society, in his radio talk (published in the *Hindusthan Review*), maintained that the chief solution of India's problems lay in the application of science to the development of the country. He feels that the cultivation of scientific knowledge and the spirit of scientific research are essential to the successful materialization of any plan for national development. India has not suffered so much from a lack of national talent or resources as from a tardy recognition and co-ordination of the same by her rulers. Prof. Hill is of the same opinion as most Indians are when he expresses his surprise at the indigent and backward condition of India in spite of possessing abundant resources and man-power. He said,

> The wealth of a country does not depend on money, which is only a token of exchange, a tool to use, a servant, not a master of policy. A country's wealth depends on three things: labour or man-power, talent or craftsmanship, and natural resources or raw material. All these things India has in vast abundance, if only they can be organized together, if only their forces can be dovetailed into a single concerted plan. Labour nearly 400 million people; talent, skill and craftsmanship—a great reservoir, all waiting to be directed to the job in hand; natural resources—some of the best in the world, in many respects almost unlimited. There is no reason at all why India should not be a happy, healthy, prosperous, and contented country, provided that the plan is skilfully drawn up and resolutely carried out. But it must be a real plan, not a set of improvizations to meet periodical emergencies whenever they occur.

Other countries like Great Britain, U. S. A., and Russia have encouraged scientists to apply their best knowledge and discoveries to schemes of national welfare and social betterment. But Indian scientists have had to struggle

hard to earn recognition. In India, however, progress of reconstruction has been slow and the difficulties to be faced are many, particularly from the vested interests, both Indian and foreign. Prof. Hill, himself an Englishman, feels strongly that something should be done in spite of these difficulties:

. . . but we have got to cut across many accepted ideas, and to deal sharply with many vested interests, if we are really to get a move on. It is much more important, after all, to improve the health, happiness, and welfare of the country than to preserve the proprieties of any existing system, or to maintain any individual privileges. . . . If anyone suggests that we would better wait until political difficulties are settled, the answer is that the best way to settle political difficulties is to get a move on now, and begin to do something practical—and then we will probably find that the political difficulties will soon settle themselves.

We shall not enter into the baffling question of the primacy of politics or economics. We stand for a spirit of progress under all circumstances. India is not behind other countries in possessing scientists and workers full of ability and enterprise. But what is needed is, as the learned professor points out, co-operation and active encouragement from established institutions and the Government.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE YOGA OF THE SAINTS. By V. H. Date, M.A., Ph. D. *Published from The Popular Book Depot, Lamington Road, Bombay 7. Pp. ix+207. Price Rs. 6.*

The book aims at 'a critical exposition of the structure, mechanism, and function of the mystical life as found in the literature of the saints in Maharashtra', like Tukarama, Ramadasa, Ekanatha, Jnaneswara, and others. But though these saints may differ in some minor details, or rather though they may emphasize certain aspects of the spiritual life in exclusion to others, their life of *sâdhanâ* is absolutely in unison with Hindu *sâdhanâ* as a whole. The book has, therefore, an all-India appeal.

The author is no dilettante, a so-called scientific thinker who believes that everything can be understood through detached observation, analysis, abstraction, and generalization. He has a taste for the mysticism he makes the subject of his study: he dedicates his book 'to his spiritual teacher.' And yet he is no blind believer. His philosophical and logical mind weighs everything in the balance before presenting it to the reader. As a consequence, responsive and reverential inquisitiveness and understanding make the volume immensely valuable.

Dr. Date's treatment of the two conversions—moral and spiritual—is very interesting: 'the initial conversion which merely turns the face of the man from one sort of life to another, a mere change in attitude; and the other, the real conversion, which brings about a change in the man himself, and not simply in his attitude' (p. 48). He also speaks of the two Dark Nights instead of the usual one: 'The first night comes before illumination and conversion; it indicates mere helplessness and ignorance. . . . As the result of disappointments, reverses, lapses, and the state of being deserted both by God and friends and relatives, there comes the second Dark Night of the Soul which is darker than the first' (pp. 199-200). His contrast between a life of imagination and a life of realization—between art and spirituality, between poetic ecstasy and mystic unitive life—is highly illuminating and convincing: 'The poet too is known as a mystic of the pantheistic type, but generally he lays the stress on the word "pan" and not on "Theos." The poet becomes aware of the things of this world first, and then of the fact that it is, . . . "informed with the spirit of God." In the mystical vision the world as denoted by the word "pan" loses itself so completely in the "Theos" that only the Theos remains. And in the mystical quest the Theos too is no longer as something "other" but the self of the saint as being realized' (pp. 192-193).

At places the author has effectively expressed the hollowness of the Western interpretation of mysticism. E. Underhill's classification of mystic visions as intellectual, imaginary, and corporeal is shown to be baseless, inasmuch as all such visions are 'ontological in essence and value' (pp. 165-166). Caroline E. Spurgeon's presentation of human beauty as an awakener of Divine inspiration is contrasted with the 'equanimity and indifference of the saints of Maharashtra towards the beauty of the skin.'

Needless to say that we are full of praises of the book. We would have appreciated it all the better had Prof. Date refrained from making some uncalled for flings at *jnâna*, which do not add to the merit of the book, but unnecessarily narrow down the outlook: 'The philosophical way, therefore, though highly useful as an adjunct, appears to us as incomparably a *low* or even a *questionable means* of attaining this peak of spiritual knowledge' (p. 118). The definition of spiritual service is equally arbitrary: 'The service which is done by building schools, hospitals, and sanatoriums, may be highest social and moral service, but is in no way a spiritual service, *unless it turns the people who receive it towards God* (p. 114). We cannot also agree with the Professor that a saint is an *avatâra* (p. 198). A saint evolves upwards, but an *avatâra* comes down for the good of the world.

We do not advert to these points simply out of a spirit of fault-finding. Rather we want to emphasize the fact that we have read the book critically, and wish it every success, though we disagree with these sporadic remarks. Students of Indian mysticism have much to learn from this small volume packed as it is with thought-provoking materials.

THE ADVENT. Edited By R. Vaidyanatha Swamy, D.Sc. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Library, Madras. Pp. 60. Annual subscription Rs. 5.*

We heartily welcome this quarterly magazine, which according to an Editorial Note, 'proposes to place Sri Aurobindo's vision of the future aspiring humanity'. The first issue of the magazine throws light on some important aspects of Sri Aurobindo's thoughts. *The creative vision of Sri Aurobindo* from the pen of Sj. Anilbaran Roy, *The Divine Mother* by Sj. Haridas Chaudhury, and *India is One* by Sj. Sisir Kumar Mitra are some of the articles for which the more seriously-minded will go in. But there are some poems, *A Dialogue,* and some *Questions and Answers* too. *Sri Aurobindo on War* sets forth his views thus: 'He is for unconditional and unreserved help—an all-out help to the Allies whose cause, according to him, is humanity's and also India's cause.' The sage of Pondicherry thus addresses himself not only to matters hitherto considered as spiritual but to much more. For according to this school of thought: 'A total spiritual direction given to the whole of life and the whole nature can alone lift humanity beyond itself.' We shall eagerly wait for its successors to see how far its self-elected mission is fulfilled.

WELL OF THE PEOPLE. By Bharati Sarabhai. (Second Impression). *Published by Vishva Bharati, 6/3, Dwarkanath Tagore Lane, Calcutta. Price Rs. 3.*

This is the second impression of the dramatized version of a true story, which appeared in Mahatma Gandhi's *Harijan*. A very poor and destitute Brahmin woman who lived in a small village and earned four annas a day by working at her spinning-wheel, cherished the pious desire of a pilgrimage to Benares. It took years for her to accumulate one hundred and fifty rupees for the purpose. But no one paid heed to her entreaties to take her to Benares. She had the idea, later, of building a well for the people, instead, in her village—a well which could be used by the *Daridra Nârâyanas*, the outcast *Harijans* of the locality, who were shunned and hated by others. She lived to feel that her true Benares lay there rather than in the distant city of Shiva.

The dramatic possibilities of such a life and such an incident with echoes of the new social and political crises of the day—'riots, strikes, prison, famines, floods,' have been explored by the artist who has framed the story on classical lines with a Chorus that renders the feelings of the dumb masses of India. Mahatma Gandhi is, as he should be, the fountain-head of the inspiration at work here. Modern Western thought started emphasizing the idea of social service as a new religion superseding formalism and orthodoxy in matters of faith, and modern poetry has taken the cue in considerably enlarging upon it as a 'new force' that is shaping the destiny of 'people', usually not without a liberal amount of declamatory abuse of the forms that piety took and the goals of religious striving sanctified by tradition throughout the ages. This tendency is manifest in our writer's reference particularly to 'unholy gross saffron orders, monks thick-coated with cant,' etc. She, however, has left no doubt in our mind as to the newness of the bottle she is using for what to some people will still be old wine that is for ever fresh. She is aggressively modern in her adoption of the new pattern of English verse. Eliot and Anden can be easily discovered in her background while in her thesis she reminds us always of Mahatmaji with a 'faint suspicion', of Vivekananda, without her knowing it. This combination of the East and West makes it a remarkable attempt to 'experiment with truths' that concern life and literature alike.

M.

PRACTICAL NATURE-CURE. By Sarma K. Lakshman. *Published by The Nature-cure Publishing House, Pudukkottai (Trichy). Pp. 490+xx. Price Rs. 7 or 15s.*

The fact that the book under review (first published in 1920) is in its sixth edition clearly shows how very useful and popular it has proved to be. The author, a well-known naturopath who has treated successfully a large number of cases dealt with in the book, has done a great service to suffering humanity by offering to the public this revised and enlarged vade-mecum of nature-cure. Lengthy chapters are devoted to the descriptions of the different curative processes such as 'fasting-cure,' 'sun-cure,' and 'water-cure'. The science of natural healing as propounded and practised by the author is simple but efficacious, and has little use for harmful drugs. According to the author, it is not only the more common ailments that are successfully treated by naturopathy, but even acute and chronic diseases can safely and profitably be dealt with. The book is written in simple English, easily intelligible to the ordinary reader, with nothing of the uncommon medical terminology. This handy volume will, we hope, be of great help to every home. It also contains the general rules of health, and instructions on proper care of children.

GURUDEV NICHOLAS ROERICH. By K. P. Padmanabhan Tampy, B.A. *Published by the Booklovers' Resort, Thycaud, Trivandrum, Pp. 94. Price not mentioned.*

ROERICH. By Leonide Andreyev, E. Gollerbach, M. Babentichikoff.

Nicholas Roerich is well known for his artistic genius and taste. In addition to his originality in art he has a great interest in human culture. Mr. Padmanabhan has examined and appreciated Roerich from different angles of vision separately in the following chapters: *A Great Unifier, A Master Artist, A Literary Star, An Apostle of Culture, The New Educationist, Roerich in India,* and lastly, *The Man and his Mission.* The foreword by K. S. Ramaswami Sastri had added to the dignity of the book. Special mention may be made of the numerous paintings of Roerich reproduced in it. Persons interested in Roerich and his work will be in very good and happy company with Mr. Padmanabhan's work of love to his master.

The second brochure on Roerich contains three well-written articles by three admirers of the artist.

HINDI

MATRI-VANI. By Shri Mataji. Translated into Hindi from English by Shri Madangopal Gadodia. *16, Rue Desbassin De Richemont, Pondicherry. Pp. 209. Price Rs. 2-4.*

This is a welcome publication. Everyone is now very inquisitive to know the meaning and import of Shri Aurobindo's message. What Mataji speaks is only the echo of the thinker of Pondicherry and thus her words are of great help to the beginners to enter into the philosophy of Shri Aurobindo. The book under review is a faithful Hindi rendering of the *Words of the Mother* which gives substantial food to the reader and invites him to think about the problems and ideals of life. We congratulate the translator on his success in this beautiful translation.

BENGALI

HINDU NARI. By Swami Abhedananda. *Published by the Shri Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 19B, Raja Rajakrishna Street, Calcutta. Pp. xxxii+112+58. Price Rs. 1-8.*

The book is divided into three parts. There is a long introduction of 21 pages in which various topics relating to Hindu womanhood, such as *upanayana,* female honour, education, marriage, widow-marriage, *sati,* etc., are discussed from the scriptural point of view, and innumerable passages from the Vedas, Smritis, and Sutras are pressed into service together with quotations from modern writers.

The main body of the book has three sections. The first section, which is the longest (80 pages) is a translation of Swami Abhedanandaji's lecture *Woman's Place in Hindu Religion* delivered about thirty-seven years ago in New York (U. S. A.). The second section is a translation of the Swamiji's *Address on Female Education* delivered in Madras in 1906. And the third section is a collection of small passages, bearing on the subject, from the various works of the Swamiji. This part of the book is amply annotated by the editor—who aims at supplementing and substantiating the remarks of the Swamiji. At places, the editor modifies the older theories in the light of later researches.

The longer editorial notes are collected in the third part of the book covering 51 pages. This is followed by an index.

The book is scholarly and timely, the style is lucid and elegant.

NEWS AND REPORTS

DISTRESS RELIEF IN TRAVANCORE STATE

Ramakrishna Mission's Appeal

Travancore State is one of the worst affected areas by the prevailing food situation in the country. In pre-war days it used to depend for about 60% of its rice supply on Burma. The State has now introduced universal rationing, but still distress prevails in very acute form, especially in the coastal regions where there are about 8 lakhs of people of low-income groups at varying stages of destitution.

In these regions the Mission is at present running two relief reconstruction centres. Besides helping about 3,000 destitute people with food, clothing, medicine and shelter, the Mission centre at Thuravoor, in order to increase the income of indigent families, has introduced cottage industries like spinning, weaving and coir-making. Ten looms and one hundred charkas are worked to full capacity, while 800 families receive loans of cocoanut husks for coir-making. Similar centres are being organized in two other badly affected areas, Arur and Kanjikuzi.

For the extension of the reconstruction work we require at least Rs. 25,000/- while an indefinite amount will be required for giving gratuitous relief to distressed families. We, therefore, appeal to the generous public all over India to help the work with liberal contributions. Contributions may kindly be sent to the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

Sd. Swami Madhavananda,
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission,
14th June, 1944.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION DISTRESS RELIEF IN BENGAL

From February last the Ramakrishna Mission's relief activities entered the second and restricted phase. Owing to paucity of funds it was no longer possible for the Mission to conduct the work in the way it would like to. So it concentrated mainly on medical and test relief work, giving gratuitous relief only in places where it was found absolutely necessary and even that to a limited number of recipients.

Medical Relief: Diseases in an epidemic form have followed in the wake of famine. Lack of vitality and resistance caused by living on a starvation diet for nearly a year has left the people a prey to all sorts of diseases. Malaria, small-pox, cholera, epidemic dropsy, dysentery, etc., are all taking a regular toll of human lives. People have been dying by hundreds. Our different relief centres tried to mitigate the sufferings of the people by distributing medicines and diet. 45 temporary dispensaries have been run besides 20 permanent ones. Specially harmful has been the effect of malaria. It has been raging in a virulent form in the different districts. To cope with the situation we purchased at the controlled rate a good quantity of quinine from the Government and have been distributing it through our different centres. We have till now distributed about 200 lbs. of quinine to 87,406 patients. To cater to infants and their mothers and patients milk canteens were run, from where milk and diet were distributed.

Test Relief: To keep up the moral tone of the people and to rehabilitate them in their old professions, thereby preventing the disintegration of families, test relief work was begun in many of our centres. We advanced about Rs. 50,000/- for this purpose, and the results so far have been very satisfactory. Various classes of artisans such as carpenters, weavers and fishermen, were reinstated in their crafts, while others have been introduced to new industries like paper-making, cane work and smithy. In some places works of public utility like road-laying, excavation of tanks, etc., have been taken up to give work to able-bodied labourers who are not able to get work and, therefore, are facing starvation.

All the types of relief work have immediate scope for expansion and intensification. Free doles of food grains also should be resumed immediately, since there has been no improvement in the condition of the people. We must very shortly begin this work. But we are very much handicapped for want of funds. Therefore we earnestly appeal to the generous public to contribute liberally to our funds and thus strengthen our hands to assuage the distress of the people.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

Sd. Swami Madhavananda,
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission,
18th June, 1944.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX AUGUST, 1944 No. 8



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

THE ESSENCE OF THE GITA

By Swami Turiyananda

You have asked me to write what is the gist of the Gita. Perhaps you know what our Master Paramahamsadeva used to say. He would say that the meaning of the Gita could be discovered by uttering the word Gita a number of times. Gita then comes to sound like *tyâgi* (Gi-ta-gi-ta-gi-ta-gi). That is to say, renunciation is the essence of the Gita. In fact, the study of the Gita makes it clear that its indubitable lesson is dedication of everything to God. Some say that the Gita teaches the pursuit of one's own calling in a spirit of non-attachment after dedicating all the fruits of work to God. If this be possible what more is needed? The Lord Himself says :—

यत् करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत् तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत् कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥

Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou givest away, whatever austerity thou practisest, O son of Kunti, do that as an offering unto Me (Gita, IX. 27).

But is it easy to succeed in this? It requires tremendous effort, it is not done without struggle. But there is no cause for despair. The Lord says: 'Gaining perfection through many births (the Yogi) then reaches the highest goal' (Gita, VI. 45).

If success is not possible in one birth, it will be so in another. Let there be no forgetting of the ideal. Practice should be continuous. In this way success must come one day. In the last incarnation man will be born with the Divine endowments, and all his tendencies will be noble. Realization of God is certain in that birth. Dedication of the self to God, total renunciation of egoism—this is the essence of the teachings of the Gita. This is my conviction. To be wholly His, not to depend at all on one's own self or others—this is the gist of the Gita. The aim of human life is gained if one can follow it so in any way. He is very compassionate; He has promised in the Gita that if one can depend on Him, He Himself does everything else. The import of the Gita is, 'My devotee is never lost.' 'The doer of good never comes to grief'—this also is one of the central truths of the Gita.

SHRI KRISHNA AND SPIRITUAL DIVERSITY

By the Editor

I

As Shri Krishna entered Kamsa's arena, just fresh from the slaughter of Kuvalayapeeda, the huge elephant that Kamsa had set against him, he presented different aspects of his personality to different spectators:

> He appeared to the wrestlers as adamant, to men as a leader, to women as the god of love incarnate, to the cowherds as their dear one, to the wicked princes as the retributor, to his own parents as a child, to the king of Bhuja as death, to the ignorant as the terrible, to the Yogis as the highest Truth, and to the Vrishnis as the Supreme God Appearing so diversely, he entered the arena with his brother (*Bhâgavata,* X. 43. 17).

When the same man can simultaneously evoke such varied reactions, it is no easy matter to draw any adequate picture of him. Nay, the difficulty becomes even greater when at times he seems to change so completely that to all intents and purposes the old personality seems to have been replaced by a new one. Thus some believe that when Shri Krishna took a dip in the Yamna on his way to Kamsa's palace in Mathura, the old Krishna of Brindavana disappeared in the river and in his place emerged the future Krishna of Mathura: the king-maker replaced the cowherd. It is hard to believe that the same man who erstwhile played and danced with the cowherd girls, can all on a sudden leap into political limelight as the leader of Yadava princes. There are similar other transformations of personality in Shri Krishna's life which seem inexplicable. The hero of a thousand battles sits at times satisfied with the none very covetable task of a charioteer in front of his friend Arjuna. The great statesman and man of affairs can not only speak the profoundest truth to urge a drooping soul on to the very midst of carnage, he, as a man of profound knowledge and realizaiton, can also inspire an Uddhava to embrace a life of *sannyâsa.* To Arjuna he says,

> Without making any distinction between happiness and sorrow or victory and defeat, engage yourself in the battle. In this way you will not incur sin (Gita, II. 38).

To Uddhava he says,

> As for yourself, you should give up all attraction for your relatives and friends; and, fixing your mind solely on me, you should roam over the earth (*Bhâgavata,* XI. 7. 6).

To Arjuna and Uddhava, he shows the paths of self-effort. But to the Gopis he says clearly that he himself is solicitous for their spiritual advance, which he brings about through overflowing and self-effacing love:

> That I stay away from you, dear though I am to your eyes, is with a view to attracting your minds, so that you may meditate on me (*Bhâgavata,* X. 47. 34).

And, when the cowherds, dumbfounded by a display of his might, begin praising him as God, he corrects them and asks them to pursue the relationship already established. To them Shri Krishna is their dear friend and not a distantly related august personage. He sees to it that the cowherds in their awe do not transgress their own nature. He says:

> If you really love me, if you are really proud of me, then look on me as on a near relative (*Vishnu-purâna,* V. 38. 1).

To us ordinary people such a multiple character is very perplexing indeed. Nay, wiseacres may denounce Shri Krishna as an opportunist. For with our limited intellectual, moral, and spiritual equipment we cannot look at things as they are, but want to interpret the world according to our own light. To us it seems that there can be but one spiritual path which all must tread. It is a straight course, and all aspirants must be at one or other point of this straight path. We hardly recognize that there may be different paths converging on the same

spiritual goal. Shri Krishna knew better, and hence in the Gita he says:

O Arjuna, whatever creed men may follow, they tread but the path leading to me (IV. 11).

According to Shri Krishna, men differ not only according to their degree of spiritual attainment, but taking all things together—birth, environment, education, mental disposition, etc.—one person seems to differ so materially from another that a different mode of spiritual approach is needed for him. It will not do to prescribe the same medicine for all patients. When the cowherds, who should be devoted to an aspect of the Deity that is more in keeping with their mode of life, worship through mistake Indra, the god of cultivators, Shri Krishna sharply tells them:

A man should worship a god under whom he has been placed by the natural circumstances of his life; for that god is the greatest and the most beneficent to him (*Vishnu-purâna*, V. 10. 30).

There is such a thing as *swadharma*, one's own natural disposition (Gita, III. 35), which must be taken fully into account. Hinduism refuses to be dogmatic in its enunciation of spiritual truths and delineation of religious paths. And the best teacher is he who can combine in himself the ideals of all aspirants. Such men are, of course, very rare; for spiritual harmony is vouchsafed only to those rare souls who have completely eradicated their egoism and made their hearts clean prisms for the presentation of spiritual light in all its unity and colourful multiplicity. Shri Krishna was not only a spiritual teacher of the highest order but also an incarnation of God; and, as such, he was able to combine in his person all the highest aspects of greatness, though they seemed contradictory at times. For he did not cater to a select few, but came for mass uplift. He knew that people are differently situated with respect to the central Truth, and, therefore, they require different paths to tread on. So he declared:

Jnâna-Yoga is for those people of renunciation who have given up work, while *Karma-Yoga* is for those who desire fruits and have not given up work. But to the man who through some stroke of good fortune is attracted by my life and teachings and who has neither renounced nor is much attached to fruits, *Bhakti-Yoga* brings fulfilment (*Bhâgavata*, XI. 20. 7-8).

Shri Krishna, however, is careful to remind us that though these psychological temperaments may often admit of classification in grades, the paths themselves cannot always be so arranged, since their worth is to be judged in terms of concrete situations from which they are all calculated to lead to the same goal. For he says, 'The goal that is attainable through knowledge is also to be achieved through Yogas. He sees truly who looks on knowledge and Yoga as one' (Gita, V. 5). Swami Vivekananda expressed the same idea in other words when he said that each man is great in his own place.

II

Shri Krishna's message was the culmination of a trend of thought that began from the time of the Vedas. The Vedas declared, 'एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति— that which is but one, sages call by various names' (*Rigveda*, II. iii. 22). The Vedic Rishis, therefore, were not content only with worshipping God in His different manifestations as Indra, Varuna, or Vâyu; they discovered in one and all of them the fullness of Godhead. Thus Indra was sometimes eulogized as the highest God, while at other times Varuna or Vâyu was given all the epithets of the Supreme Deity. They found nothing incongruous in God's assuming different forms and yet preserving His full Divinity everywhere, for in the Divine world mathematical laws are reversed:

That (Brahman) is infinite, and this manifestation is infinite. The infinite proceeds from the infinite. (Then) taking the infinitude of the infinite (manifestation), it remains as the infinite Brahman alone (*Brihadâranyakopanishad*, V. i. 1).

Such a conception of the Godhead is wide enough to be all-inclusive and yet

deep enough to present Reality in Its fullest manifestation. Hence all true Hindus cannot but work for harmony and goodwill; and their *avatâras* also, who are but full emanations from Fullness Itself, cannot but present innumerable facets of Truth to their followers. This was, as already noted, amply illustrated in the life of Shri Krishna. The devotees realized Shri Krishna as none other than God.

> To those who really know Shri Krishna, everything, whether living or inert, is a form of God, there is nothing beside God (*Bhâgavata*, XI. 14. 56).

The difference between God and his incarnation is that, whereas the former, though all-pervasive, is still unknown, an incarnation illumines every sphere of life and paves the way for the spiritual progress of all who come into contact with him. He is like a blazing fire which sets others ablaze, though they may not actually know it or even want it. As Shri Ramakrishna used to say, 'If you put your hand into a fire even unknowingly, will it not scorch it?' The point worthy of note in this connection is that, contact with Shri Krishna never failed to lift others a step higher in spiritual life. As the *Bhâgavata* declares:

> If even by suckling Shri Krishna with deadly poison, Putanâ could attain the highest state, why should not those who offer him everything through love and reverence as did his mothers? (*Bhâgavata*, X. 6. 37).

That it was no mere platitude, is emphasized again and again by the scriptures. Thus it is said, on the one hand, that Kamsa and Shishupâla, his two mortal enemies, were so much engrossed in their plans for ruining him and were so mightily afraid of him that they had scarcely any time to think of anything but him (cf. *Bhâgavata*, X. ii. 24). And, on the other hand, the blessed Gopis were so thoroughly in love with him that they, too, could think of nothing else. As a result both classes of people came spiritually nearer to Shri Krishna and to one another, though outwardly they tread two diametrically opposite paths (cf. *Bhâgavata*, XI. 5. 48). For it is held by the Hindus that man's mental outlook and character change according to the idea or image he fixes his mind on, either through love, or envey, or fear (cf. *Bhâgavata*, XI. 9. 22 and *Chhândogyopanishad*, III. xiv. 1). All that is necessary is sincere effort for progress. If it is misdirected, God will see to it that it takes a better turn.

This should not be interpreted as an encouragement to unethical conduct on the supposition that when both morality and immorality can lead to the same goal, ethics loses all its appeal. This is entirely a wrong way of approach. The point emphasized by the scriptures is that God is so merciful that He can meet the most backward soul on his own plane of understanding, and lift him from there, if only he sincerely follows his chosen path and sticks to it honestly and boldly against all odds. Not all people can be so true and heroic. Besides, the path that suits a Kamsa or a Shishupâla is hardly suited for ordinary mortals. If instead of recognizing this fact people become perversely immoral with a view to enjoying the good things of this world and not for establishing some intimate relationship with God, they are bound to deviate from the path to perfection and come to grief at last.

This brings us to a consideration of the place of morality in Shri Krishna's life. Apparently he threw all moral tenets to the wind in most of his distinguishing achievements for which the Hindus still honour him. He played the super-statesman in the battle of Kurukshetra and was thus in a way responsible for a horrible carnage. True, he tried to establish a more equitable society. But, then, he was advocating entirely bad means for promoting a good end. The other controversy is with regard to *Râsa-leelâ*, the folk-dance which in a moon-lit night Shri Krishna enjoyed in the company of some cowherd girls. The problem is

too big to be dealt with fully within the scope of a small article. We shall just touch upon some essential points. There are some who, while advocating heartily the teachings of the Gita, condemn the *Râsa-leelâ* as spurious—the interpolation of some poet who delighted in sensual love. There are others who swear by the *Râsa-leelâ* but condemn the Gita as meant only for comparatively backward and timid souls, whose religion consists only in social morality and not in actual spiritual achievement—in an increase in love for God. There are still others who cannot take these two incidents at their face value, but give them some allegorical interpretation. To all these people our answer is, Shri Krishna's character must be studied as a whole. It is all true or all false, it is all fact or all fiction. You cannot pick and choose at will. You cannot, for instance, say that Shri Krishna was immoral since he had innumerable wives and children, and deny at the same time his having held the Govardhana hill over his head. For humanly speaking, both these feats are impossible. If one cannot hold aloft a hill, neither can one have as many wives and children as Shri Krishna had. Hindus take his life as a whole as it is presented in the scriptures, and they frankly declare that Hinduism stands or falls with Shri Krishna, for he is Hinduism in flesh and blood and action.

III

It is wrong to decry Shri Krishna as a war-monger or enticer of young girls. For those who have read his life know in what light to take all these things. In private life Shri Krishna was a strict moralist. As a boy he was the most obliging friend, a very dutiful son and an obedient brother. He was ever ready to face danger for the sake of others. To dumb beasts he was very kind. And he was always eager to translate his intellectual conviction into action against all odds. Thus as soon as he found that the worship of Indra was a meaningless thing in so far as the immediate duty of caring for the cows and their pasture was neglected, he stood in revolt and forced the cowherds to give up that worship and attend more carefully to the duties in hand. His eagerness for learning was equally pronounced. Thus at the first opportunity he went to the sage Sandipani to learn the various arts. Above all, his sparkling selflessness could not but appeal to all. After killing Kamsa he put Ugrasena on the throne rather than himself or his father. Though he was the real hero of the battle of Kurukshetra he was satisfied all through with the none very covetable position of a charioteer.

Was such a person a war-monger? Readers of the *Mahâbhârata* know how earnestly he worked for peace, even though he was insulted and put to difficulties at every step. To avoid a protracted war with Jarâsandha, he shifted the Yadava capital from Mathura to Dwarka. And in general he never took the field first. A perfect gentleman, he fully knew Kshatriya etiquette, chivalry, and honour; and yet he would put up with all insults till public duty demanded harsher dealings from him. The strict moralist will say, He could have avoided all this by shunning the world and embracing a *sannyâsin's* life. Well, if he did, Hinduism and the world would not be what they are, they would still grope in the dark in which Shri Krishna found them. He dared and did, he chose to face opposition rather than avoid it, and he had his mission fulfilled. A wicked world had to take his impress in spite of all its perversity. Through him was made Vedanta practical, and Karma-Yoga came to stay

as a mode of worship. The haughty Kshatriya princes and princesses who would not care for any advice gratis, however high and cogent that might be, had to bow down before one of their compeers who could beat them at their own games when need arose, and who yet all the while found the greatest delight in the congenial company of the devoted poor masses—of Sudâma, Uddhava, the hump-backed old hag, and the blessed cowherd boys and girls.

Our moral prudes, however, turn up their noses at the very mention of the *Râsa-leelâ*. We admit that this *leelâ* is not for the ears of all and sundry, for in the hands of the sensuous it is liable to misinterpretation. Swami Vivekananda used to say that only those who have completely eradicated sex from their thoughts, can appreciate the full significance of this Divine disport, for Divine it certainly was. Consider the circumstances connected with it. Shri Krishna was just a young boy,[1] though the girls who joined in that dance were advanced in age. They went there, or rather were forced to go there, because the sound of his flute was so maddening that those who could not for some reason leave their houses left their bodies then and there and joined him in spirit. We have yet to learn that any human melody can separate the soul from the body. On the bank of the Yumna they danced and played not with one Krishna but innumerable Krishnas, one by each of them. Thus went by many nights, although they felt these to be just a few hours. Many were such supernatural incidents accompanying this dance; and it was all related by Shri Shuka, who from his very childhood became a *sannyâsin* declining even to look at women. This Divine dance is only comparable to the one in which God plays daily with our soft emotions in the deep recesses of our hearts illumined by His own Divine effulgence. Only men of purity can understand all this. For other wiseacres, it is but proper to suspend judgement, for their hasty condemnation often displays a sex-ridden mind at work.

We fear that Shri Krishna's example may make short work of social morality. Our mistake lies in generalizing too much an individual spiritual *milieu*. What was true and noble for Shri Krishna may not be so for us. Besides, the individual relationships recorded in the scriptures are not for indiscriminate imitation; were it so, the well-balanced and well-thought-out subsequent messages of great men would be of no use. The *Bhâgavata* very appropriately remarks:

> There is a universality about the messages of the God-like people; but such is seldom the case with their conduct. An intelligent man should follow only those examples which are made meaningful by their own messages (*Bhâgavata*, X. 33. 31).

We repeat: Shri Krishna represented the true spirit of Hinduism which cares not so much for mechanical social adjustment as for actual spiritual perfection, and which aims not at systems of ethics and religion, but at leading aspiring souls to the true goal of life. As a consequence Shri Krishna had a very catholic view embracing all religious paths each of which had its relative worth in his eyes. Through his mercy for erring humanity he could not neglect a single sincere soul however low it might be. Shri Krishna is thus Hinduism and Hinduism is Shri Krishna; the two are the obverse and reverse of the same coin—the one is theory, the other is concrete illustration.

[1] Nilakantha in his commentary on the *Harivamsha* (*Vishnuparva*, XX. 18) says that Shri Krishna was then just over ten years of age. Long after this incident, Kamsa speaks of Shri Krishna and Balarâma as young boys: यावन्न बलमारूढौ रामकृष्णौ सुबालकौ (*Vishnu-purâna*, V. 15 6).

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DIVINE LEELA

By Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee

(*Concluded*)

VIII. The True Import of Infinitude of the Absolute Spirit

It is to be most carefully borne in mind that the infinitude of the Supreme Spirit consists neither in its antithesis to finitude nor in the totality of all finite existences. The infinite which is contrasted with the finite does not alone and by itself exhaust the whole sphere of thought. If the infinite be conceived as merely the negation of the finite, it is not only limited by the finite, but it is not a positive reality at all. The sum total of all finite existences also cannot constitute one real infinite entity. The aggregate of realities is no positive reality. Nor should the infinitude of the Absolute Spirit be conceived on the analogy of the infinity of space and time. The infinitude of the Absolute Spirit consists in His non-duality, absoluteness, unconditionalness, and hence He alone is truly infinite. Truly conceived, He exhausts the whole sphere of conception and existence. There is and can be no reality, which is not His self-expression, which has existence apart from and independent of His existence, which does not exist for Him, by Him, and in Him. He alone exists in, by, and for Himself.

No being that does not exist by its own will and power can be regarded as truly self-existent. A perfectly self-existent Being must exist by Himself and for Himself, i.e., He must exist by His own independent will and power and for His own consciousness and enjoyment. Accordingly the Absolute Spirit alone is really self-existent, and His self-existence necessarily implies His infinite will and power, His infinite consciousness and enjoyment. Existence may be predicated of all derivative and dependent and finite realities, all phenomenal appearances within the realm of space and time; but self-existence can be predicated only of the one, infinite, eternal, perfect, self-conscious, self-enjoying Absolute Spirit. The one, non-dual Absolute Spirit eternally enjoys His infinite existence, His infinite will and power, His infinite knowledge and wisdom, His infinite beauty and magnificence.

This eternal self-enjoyment of the Absolute Spirit is manifested in the appearance and disappearance in time of all possible finite existences, all possible forms of will and power, all possible orders of consciousness and knowledge, all possible modes of beauty and magnificence. Thus as the most perfect player and artist He eternally enjoys Himself in and through the creation of a cosmic order, in which there are endless diversities of relative realities, all being harmonized, unified, and beautified by His blissful will and consciousness. We cannot think of any possible state of existence, any possible form of knowledge and feeling and desire, any possible plane of consciousness, which does not find its place in this cosmic self-expression of the Absolute Spirit. The Absolute Spirit being infinite in His essential character, His self-expressions also are of relatively infinite orders. He is the inexhaustible source, perfectly free, and self-conscious of all phenomenal existences of all times and places.

These phenomenal existences, which are the sportive and artistic self-expressions of the Absolute Spirit, have each their special features, and these special features distinguish them from one another as well as from their source. But they are all substantially non-different from the Absolute Spirit who reveals Himself in and through them. He, of course, transcends them all. His

essential character does not undergo any transformation or modification in course of His self-manifestation. He is eternally conscious of Himself as above all His self-expressions as well as immanent in each and all of them. His blissful and perfect non-duality is never affected by the pluralistic manifestations of His self-enjoying spiritual nature. He may thus be regarded as eternally one as well as many—one in His personal identity and many in His self-expressions. The many are non-different from, as well as distinguishable from, Him.

IX. The Absolute and His Maya-Shakti

The very idea of self-expression necessarily implies the idea of self-limitation in it. No particular self-expression or group of self-expressions can possibly give adequate expression to the perfect nature of the Absolute Spirit. Everywhere only a particular element of His glorious nature is manifested. His infinite knowledge and power, His infinite beauty and goodness, His infinite existence and magnificence, His infinite self-consciousness and self-enjoyment, are bit by bit manifested in the variety of His self-manifestations. This implies the presence of a unique power and will of self-limitation in the Absolute Spirit. This free self-determining power of self-limitation and self-diversification of the Absolute Spirit is called His *mâyâ*. It is by virtue of this *mâyâ* that the Absolute Spirit eternally performs His cosmic *leelâ* and manifests Himself in the endless variety of finite spirits associated with countless orders of finite mental and physical bodies and material objects and events.

In this cosmic temporal and spatial self-expression of the Absolute Spirit, there is order and harmony, regularity and uniformity, plan and design, which indicate unfathomable power and wisdom and knowledge involved in His *mâyâ-shakti*. There is also a moral law ruling over and regulating all the phenomena of this universe in accordance with some ideal to be realized in and through them. This moral law also must pertain to the character of the *mâyâ-shakti*. The principle of evolution which we find operating in the world of living beings, is essentially the principle of the progressive self-unfoldment of the finite spirits in this cosmic self-manifestation of the Absolute Spirit. The finite spirits, which are the individualized spiritual self-manifestations of the Absolute Spirit in this world and as such are essential *parts* of Himself and participators in His spiritual character, are gradually passing through various inorganic, organic, sentient, and rational embodiments and progressively freeing themselves from the worldly limitations of their existence and consciousness and advancing towards the realization of their identity with the Divine. This is the real, though hidden, meaning of evolution, and it implies the presence of a force of attraction drawing the finite spirits from their mundane limitations towards the perfection of the Absolute Spirit. This also is a form of self-expression of the Absolute Spirit and in relation to the finite spirits it is called His love and mercy, which operate in this world of *mâyâ* for the progressive liberation of His individualized spiritual parts.

X. Three Principal Modes of His Self-expression in the World of Maya

In the scheme of the universe we experience three principal modes of self-expression of the Absolute Spirit. One is the organized system of innumerable orders of material objects and phenomena. They start from the simplest and most homogeneous forms of inorganic matter and end with the most complex and heterogeneous forms of highly organized psycho-physical bodies. In all these modes of self-expression the Absolute Spirit completely veils His self-existent, self-luminous, self-determining, and self-enjoying character and

exhibits Himself as a plurality of derivative, unconscious, dependent, and relative phenomenal realities. All of them appear as conditioned by time and space, produced from causes and producing effects, possessing characteristics as objects of consciousness and undergoing changes and modifications through the operations of extraneous forces. In this system of the material universe the Absolute Spirit conceals His essential character and appears as what He is not. This mode of sportive self-expression of the Absolute Spirit is the product of His inscrutable *mâyâ-shakti*, the very nature of which is to veil the true eternal and infinite non-dual character of the Spirit and to manifest Him as a system of objects apparently altogether different from Him.

The second mode of self-expression of the Absolute Spirit is in the form of innumerable finite spirits (*jivas*). These finite spirits participate in the essential spiritual character of the Absolute Spirit. They are in their essential nature eternally pure and good, self-conscious and self-determining, changeless and blissful. But on account of their finitude, the purity and goodness, self-consciousness and self-determination, peace and bliss of their essential nature appear under various kinds of limitations imposed upon them by the *mâyâ-shakti*. Their essential spiritual nature remains unrealized so long as they are within the domain of *mâyâ*. Though essentially above time and space, they think and feel themselves to be occupying a small portion of space and passing through diverse conditions in time. Though essentially untouched by matter, they identify themselves with the material bodies and feel themselves as dependent upon the material conditions for their happiness and self-fulfilment, for their knowledge and goodness and beauty. They appear in this world as finite centres of experience and they act upon the world and are acted upon by the world in diverse ways. They are placed in relation to various kinds of physical embodiments and environments and are made to pass through various stages in their progressive self-realization and liberation from the bondage of *mâyâ*. In the scheme of this universe there is a design for the gradual self-realization and final release of the finite spirits. It is only in the human body that the finite spirit can through enlightened self-conscious and self-determined self-discipline perfectly emancipate itself from the illusory bondages and limitations imposed upon it by *mâyâ* and fully realize its inherent purity, goodness, beauty, and bliss as a *part* of the Absolute Spirit. Having transcended the illusion created by *mâyâ*, it consciously dwells in the Absolute Spirit, it perceives the Absolute Spirit within itself, and perceives itself in the Absolute Spirit. Its life in the Absolute Spirit becomes a life of infinite bliss.

Thus in this mode of sportive self-expression, the Absolute Spirit eternally enjoys Himself from innumerable centres of experience, and with the most wonderful play of artistic intelligence leads each of the centres step by step to the highest and most comprehensive view-point. The Absolute Spirit Himself becomes countless finite spirits and through each of them progressively realizes His eternal Infinitude. Such self-manifestations of the Absolute Spirit as finite spirits are spoken of as the expressions of His *tatastha-shakti* or *jiva-shakti*. Each *jiva* is, on the one hand, subject to self-forgetfulness and limitation to the point of practically losing itself in matter and, on the other hand, is endowed with the inherent capacity and urge for transcending all kinds of limitations and realizing its unity with the Absolute.

In relation to these two modes of His own sportive self-expression, which together constitute the universe, the Absolute Spirit also plays the part of the omnipotent and omniscient, just

and righteous, benevolent and merciful Legislator and Ruler. He acts as the soul and immanent ideal of the universe and as the universal Self ruling and guiding from within all individual selves and controlling their destinies. He preserves order and harmony among all the diversities of the universe and regulates all in accordance with the unity of plan and purpose immanent in His cosmic play. He is the Supreme Lord of His own self-manifestations. Thus in His cosmic play we find the Absolute Spirit in three forms, viz., *Ishvara*, *jiva*, and *jagat*—God the Supreme Lord, God the finite spirits, and God the phenomenal world.

XI. The Supra-cosmic Play of the Absolute Spirit

The exponents of the doctrine of *leelâ* maintain that the cosmic play of the Absolute Spirit—His self-expression under the self-imposed limitations of time and space—is the *shadow* of His eternal supra-cosmic play—His self-enjoyment on a perfectly spiritual plane above time and space. The phenomenal world is regarded as a graded manifestation of a transcendent spiritual world, in which the unity and infinity, perfection and absoluteness, purity and goodness, beauty and bliss of the Supreme Spirit are *not veiled under*, but splendidly manifested in and reflected upon His particularized self-expressions. Each of His self-expressions in the spiritual world (*chinmaya-dhâma*, *parama-vyoma*) is spiritual (*chinmaya*) and as such is above all temporal and spatial limitations. His perfect self-existence is eternally manifested in various orders of spiritual existences; His perfect self-consciousness is manifested in various orders of spiritual self-conscious beings. All of them eternally participate in His beauty and bliss. All of them eternally live and move and have their being in Him. Each of them sees Him in himself and all and sees himself and all in Him. His world is non-different from Him. All the forms of His self-expression are non-different from Him. He enjoys Himself eternally in them and through them, without any obstruction, without any limitation. The law operating in this spiritual world is the law of His perfectly free self-enjoyment, which, of course, cannot be defined and codified. Here the difference between the infinite and the finite, between the absolute and the relative, between the universal and the particular, between the one and the many, is perfectly transcended. It is a realm in which the formal logic of the imperfect human intellect finds itself beyond its depth, but in which the finite spirit finds itself at home in the depth of its spiritual self-realization and self-enjoyment.

The *leelâ* of the Absolute Spirit on this absolutely spiritual plane exhibits what is called His *antaranga-shakti*—His innermost spiritual Power. In the region of the play of this *shakti*, His perfect, self-existent, self-conscious, and self-enjoying nature is most perfectly revealed. The Absolute Spirit as revealed in this realm is conceived by the devotees as the ultimate object of their love, reverence, worship, and meditation. It is through the concentration of their mind and heart on Him and Him alone that they hope to get rid of the limitations of the phenomenal world and to enjoy the freedom and bliss of the spiritual plane.

XII. Avatara-Leela

There is another form of the sportive self-expression of the Absolute Spirit, and it is to this form that people in general ordinarily refer when they speak of the Divine *leelâ*. It is the descent (*avatâra*) of the Supra-cosmic into the cosmic, the coming-down of the play of the spiritual plane into the material plane. In this form the Supreme Spirit manifests Himself in the material world with a material body under exceptional circumstances and occasionally constructs a bridge, as it were, between the material and the

spiritual worlds. In strict accordance with the inscrutable plan of His cosmic play, He sometimes allows the forces of disorder and disunion—the forces of materialistic greed and vanity and mutual hatred and hostility—to become apparently more powerful than the forces of peace, harmony, and unity, the forces of love, benevolence, renunciation, and service, the forces of spiritual idealism and moral goodness. Normal life on such occasions becomes more centrifugal than centripetal. People in general become worshippers of sensuous pleasure, military power, and economic prosperity. Organized barbarism assumes the honoured name of civilization. The will of the mightiest persons or organizations becomes the law for the ordinary people. All these amount to a revolt of the forces apparently predominant in the world for the time being against the fundamental spiritual plan of the cosmic system, against the principle of the progressive unfoldment of the glorious nature of the Spirit in this world of *mâyâ*.

The Supreme Spirit playfully allows these rebellious forces (which also are, of course, His own self-manifestations) to grow stronger and stronger and then at the proper time makes a special manifestation of His Divine power in the form of an exceptionally brilliant personality, puts down those rebellious forces, strengthens the forces of love, renunciation, service, and spiritual idealism and puts the world order again on the basis of peace, harmony, and unity. This is a peculiar game—the game of creating rebellions against Himself and fighting them down. It is through the agency of the rebellious forces that the human world is found to make great materialistic progress. Man asserts himself against God and His spiritual plan, makes a splendid exhibition of the powers of invention and organization with which he is Divinely endowed, declares his own independence while robbing others of their independence, and destroys the harmony of relationships amongst the forces of the world. Such rebellious self-expressions of the Divine power and wisdom glorify themselves and forget the Divinity in them.

The Divine Player with His transcendent spiritual powers appears to take great pleasure in playing with His Satanic self-manifestations, which alone muster the courage of challenging His supreme authority and facing Him as His rivals. He playfully makes His appearance on earth with appropriate psycho-physical organisms in order, as it were, to re-establish His authority over the world-system. In different epochs of the history of the world the Satanic forces assume different forms and He also comes down in diverse forms to meet and play with them.

Such special self-manifestations, called *avatâra*, of the Supreme Spirit are outwardly finite and relative, but inwardly infinite and absolute. On such occasions He is born and brought up as a finite creature, He lives and moves and speaks and acts as an exceptionally gifted finite being, He devises and executes plans and contrivances like a finite intelligent and resourceful man for achieving His purposes and playing His roles; but inwardly He is conscious of Himself as the infinite and eternal spirit, omnipotent and omniscient, above all births and deaths, above all purposes and actions, above all limitations and requirements. While playing a special part through a special body, He knows Himself to be the innermost Self of all bodies, to be immanent in the whole universe and also to be eternally transcendent of it. He demonstrates in His life the conjunction of the finite and the infinite, the temporal and the eternal, the relative and the absolute, the material and the spiritual. His body, senses, mind, and intellect, though outwardly appearing as belonging to the world of *mâyâ*, are all spiritualized,—are externalized manifestations of His *antaranga-chit-shakti*, and the men of true spiritual insight can recognize them as such.

Along with playing a special part in the world-system, an *avatâra* demonstrates to the truth-seekers how it is possible for one to live and move in this world and at the same time to transcend it, to perform particular actions in accordance with one's place and functions in society, and at the same time to remain absolutely unaffected by the actions and their consequences and the changes of circumstances, how to dwell in the empirical and the spiritual worlds at the same time and to enjoy the perfectly blissful freedom of the domain of the Spirit in this domain of phenomenal diversities. An *avatâra* is thus a living example of the spiritual height a man can attain in this world. By coming down to the world of *mâyâ* as special incarnations, the supreme spirit attracts the finite spirits of this world towards the freedom, unity, beauty, peace, and bliss of the Divine life and shows them the path of liberation from all bondage and limitation.

XIII. Historical Shri Krishna, the Most Perfect Avatara of Shri Krishna the Absolute

The Supreme Spirit does not exhibit the infinite glories of His transcendent life equally in all His *avatâras*. In His cosmic play varieties of emergent situations are created at different times in different parts of the world, and in harmony with the requirements of these situations the Lord assumes diverse forms and manifests His Divine power and wisdom and beauty in diverse ways. By His super-ordinary life and activities and teachings He solves the extraordinary problems of the particular situations and brings about order, harmony, and unity in the human race. Different aspects of the spiritual glories of the Divine life are exhibited on different occasions. But on each occasion the finite spirits find the Supreme Spirit nearer and nearer to themselves. Each *avatâra* inspires the finite spirits with the hope of inwardly transcending the bondages and limitations of finite life within this world and attaining unity with the Divine through the performance of worldly duties in pursuance of the sportive activities of the perfectly free Supreme Spirit.

Of all the great historic personalities, that have been accepted by the human race as the special *avatâras* or incarnations of God, Shri Krishna, whose life-story is depicted in the *Mahâbhârata*, the *Bhâgavata*, and the other Purânas and the spiritual significance of whose descent into the world is brilliantly illustrated by numerous well-known saintly thinkers, appears to be the most perfect. In His life Divinity is manifested in the most glorious forms and in a large variety of aspects. He has demonstrated in His mundane life how the most well-planned activities of the greatest historic importance can be most thoroughly executed *in the most sportive spirit* and how the Divine ideal of creative work can be fully realized even in the most critical situations in the human society. He has shown the most brilliant example of converting work into play and converting play into creative works of the highest and most permanent value. In His life at Brindavana, Mathura, Dwaraka, Kurukshetra, and other parts of India and in the roles He played in the political, social, moral, and spiritual reconstruction of India, His devotees find a complete picture of Divinity. It is in the light of the life and teachings of Shri Krishna that the Vaishnavas form the highest conception of the Absolute Spirit, and hence by Shri Krishna they mean not merely a historic Divine personality, but the eternal, infinite, self-conscious, self-enjoying Absolute Spirit, who incarnated Himself as the historical Shri Krishna and the other *avatâras* and who is the sole free spiritual substance and cause of the universe. All conscious and unconscious, cosmic and supra-cosmic existences and phenomena are His *leelâ*.

SHRI KRISHNA AND THE MODERN MINDS*

By Prof. Batuk Nath Bhattacharya

War and the Negation of God

One of the acute thinkers of the present age, Mr. Aldous Huxley, remarks that God manifests Himself in various modes and that His present mode of manifestation is negation. When we think of the present war which is scourging the world from one end to the other, the horrors that have been let loose, the unspeakable cruelties that in the name of the highest human ideals, patriotism, democracy, international justice, uplift of the submerged, permanent world-peace, etc., are ruthlessly practised by man on man, the ravages of war that are turning the world upside down as it were, the insensate sacrifice of millions, the desolated homes, man reduced to the level of the brutes and the primitive instincts of animality glorified under specious names, humanity drunk with blood and madly pursuing the lust for power and revelling in miseries and privations, hardships and sufferings borne and inflicted, 'mankind preying on itself like monsters of the deep,' and no voices lifted in prayer to the Powers on High to terminate this calamity nor any Hand reaching out from Above to succour the cursed generations from the orgies of murder and corruption and depravity, we are naturally led to assent to Huxley's proposition that in the present age our world, if not the universe, is indeed God-forsaken, that the Being who through the ages past has been adored and has been given heart's worship and been looked upon as the Father, Protector, Supreme Consoler, has withdrawn Himself somewhere in the Unapparent, beyond the range of whatsoever is perceived, apprehended, inferred. This philosophy of negative revelation, however, is not an isolated expression of the thought of the age. Nor have the woes that we are now suffering proceeded from nothing, but they are the fruits of years of feverish, purblind preparation, material, psychological, cultural, and doctrinal. Bertrand Russell defining and formulating the creed of the epoch preceding this second World War has the sentences:

> That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving, that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms, that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling can preserve an individual life beyond the grave, that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noon-day brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand.

The present World War is an illustration of the Nemesis that overtakes thinking awry—the attempt to rear a safe habitation for the soul on the firm foundation of unyielding despair. Between the first World War and the second, the life of a generation intervened; but during this period a materialism more thorough, more systematic, more comprehensive than any preceding phase was sedulously cultivated. In a world, filled with an abundance of good things, with objects that regale the senses, which quicken and pamper the appetites, with marvels of human invention and manufacture, with the subtleties and refinements of thought and reasoning that high intellectual culture lays open, this cult of negation

* Paper read at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta.

was more than a luxury of thought. It was a moral and intellectual necessity—the inevitable outcome of the habits of thought and speculation that had steadily been pursued. 'As a man soweth so shall he reap,' goes the adage. And secularism with all its offshoots having been sown and planted, no wonder nihilism, not as the philosophy of individual life but of the race, should be the practical logical conclusion. As the Upanishads say,

> He does indeed lose his existence if he believes Brahman to be non-existent. The learned, however, know that one to be existent who is conscious that Brahman exists.

To say that the present mode of manifestation of the Divinity is negation, perhaps, signifies no more than that He is the Unapparent, Ultimate Absolute Reality, to conceive of whom in terms of human percepts and concepts is an impossible feat. But the limitations of man's senses and understanding are no valid reason for denying His reality. The ruth of science, the beauty of art, and goodness in conduct intuit the presence of an *Other*. There is no human self in isolation, no ego without this *Other*. And modern scientific thought tends to prove that we can never know God by a process of flawless logic. But the nobler hypothesis is no more than believing in the existence of other people, in the existence of that mysterious entity—odourless, colourless, formless, soundless—which goes by the name of matter.

Mr. Huxley, though indulging in the epigrammatic paradox with which I have begun, yet knows that the wheels of Heaven, though grinding slow, grind exceeding small, and one of his latest novels, *After Many a Summer*, inculcates the truth that man is ruled not by his own whims and self-will but is eternally at the mercy of enormous forces that lie outside him and beyond his power and that the laws of God are never ignored with impunity far less circumvented by human ingenuity. This truth comes home to the mind that is alert and active, not dormant, sluggish and indifferent, to the soul that is intense and energetic whether in acceptance or in rejection, in love or in hate, in adherence or in opposition. The worst sin of spiritual life is sloth, carelessness, and a lukewarm disposition. May the Lord the fragments of whose Infinite personality are imperfectly dwelt upon in the following pages, instil into the present generation of men that resolute will and that alertness of thought.

God-Incarnation

At a time when the spiritual atmosphere is charged with the germs of this miasmic thought and mankind is whirling in the vortex of a cataclysm, it may seem peculiarly inapt to look back upon the pieties and sanctities and beatitudes that flourished in times of peace and plenty, contentment and serenity that are no more. It is possible, however, to view the present age with the symptoms indicated above in two ways. One may think that this is going to be the final and enduring phase in the life of humanity or with the eye of faith one may survey the past and point to similar moral and spiritual crises in former ages from which rescue came through the intervention of Divine Power. The incarnation of the Lord which is celebrated on the *Janmâshtami* day in the sombre, showery month of August has been a reminder to the world of a profound truth: 'Whenever righteousness decays, O Bhârata, and unrighteousness flourishes, I become incarnated.' This truth is the burden of our Purânas. And in the *Chandi*—the hymn with seven hundred stanzas—the Divine Mother holds out the same heartening assurance to the believing heart: 'Thus ever and anon when demonic affliction will occur, I will descend to the earth and cause the destruction of the adversary.' Amidst the gloom of despair, and the thickening mist of disbelief and spiritual confusion, this assurance has

been the lamp of hope and the elixir of life to fainting, faltering humanity in this historic land through the ages. And this is one of the reasons why the personality of Shri Krishna as the saviour of humanity has since the time of the *Mahâbhârata* exercised an ever-widening influence over the minds of Hindus. If an account be taken of the ascendancy and decline of the deities that the people of India have adored and worshipped in the gradual evolution of religious faith, pre-eminence has to be yielded to this dominating figure. From the Vedic hymns downwards the objects of worship have, like heavenly orbs, risen and set in the mental firmament of the race. No deity, at any time worshipped, has been, perhaps, altogether forgotten and laid aside. There are many, at one time the centre of a widely spread cult, as shown by numerous hymns and the rites in their honour, who are now recalled only in rare minor ceremonies and subsidiary devotional acts. There are two figures, however, which for at least three millennia have dominated thought and inspired and vitally influenced conduct and life's course in Indian religious history. These two are Râma and Krishna—the first the ideal householder, son, husband, brother, friend, and king—and the second the ideal of detachment, the 'great illustration of non-attachment' in Swami Vivekananda's words, the inspirer of world-forsaking devotion and self-forgetting adoration.

Historicity of Shri Krishna

The personality of Shri Krishna may be and has been viewed from a variety of standpoints. The question has been asked: Is he a historical character? The modern mind craves certainty and definiteness. And the evidence of the most ancient literary documents in Sanskrit—the texts of Panini, of the *Chhândogya Upanishad*, of the *Aitareya* and *Shatapatha Brâhmanas*—have been adduced to prove that the tradition goes back to the remotest times, being based on productions almost contemporaneous with the date of His appearance in our mortal world. The *Bhâgavata* religion, the cult of Vaishnavism, goes back demonstrably to the Vedic times, and since then an extensive literature—both philosophical and devotional—has gathered round this outstanding figure. Again the question has been asked whether Shri Krishna did originally possess the personality that is ascribed to him in the *Mahâbhârata*, the *Vishnu-purâna*, and the *Bhâgavata*, whether there have not been accretions in later times which by their inconsistencies and legendary and mythical encrustations warp and conceal the historical individual. Again there are the different systems of Vaishnava philosophy that have by degrees grown up since the time of the *Shândilya* and *Nârada Sutras*. The cult of devotion itself has its many facets and Shri Krishna has been the object of adoration of varied kinds—devotion (quietistic), servitude, friendly love, parental affection, amorous sentiment—shades and variations of outlook and emotion embodied in and permitting of adequate reproduction only in stupendous volumes. Which of these is the right approach, the right mode of worship, sanctioned by the ancient and authoritative scriptures? The Vaishnavas of the South consider that among the many incarnations of the Deity one is *archâvatâra*, i.e., His incarnation in the image in which the presence of the deity is invoked and worshipped. Iconographists take up the question and collect and classify, date and arrange the innumerable images that are scattered through the length and breadth of India and try to establish what might be regarded as the most ancient and authentic representation. Among the Vaishnavas, again, a topic of absorbing interest is the partial or complete Divinity of the several incarnations. This question of complete incarnation of the Divinity in Krishna is discussed at considerable length in

the fourth disquisition of Jiva Gosvami's *Bhâgavata Sandarbha.*

Amidst this battle of books, this hubbub of disputes among scholars, historians, antiquarians, iconographists, philosophers—the problem of gleaning a single truth is beset with insurmountable difficulties, and to evolve harmony and to reconcile the divergences become an impossibility.

His Real Presence

The truth about the Real Presence of Shri Krishna is not, however, likely to be caught in the meshes that may be spread by the truth-seekers, the pursuers of systematized knowledge, the scientist's crucible, the historian's investigations, the speculations of logicians and scholars. There is a well-known dictum : In regard to the Deity, a Brahmin, a *mantra* or mystic formula, an astrologer, a medicine, or a spiritual preceptor, one realizes success according as one conceives.

And again there is the saying of the Lord Krishna :

> I do not dwell in Vaikuntha (Abode of Bliss) nor in the hearts of Yogis, O Nârada ; I am present where my devotees chant my name together.

And again the Purânas declare with truth:

> Where there is a *tulasi* garden, where there is a stretch of water overgrown with lotuses, where the Purânas are recited, there is the immediate presence of Hari.

Therefore the personality of Shri Krishna is a matter of direct spiritual experience such as is within the reach of the devotee, the saint. He lives eternally in the ecstatic songs of Mirabai and of Surdas, the devotional lyrics of the Alwars of the South, the *abhangs* of Maharashtra, in the lyrics inspired by a poignant sense of separation from the Lord that lay behind the raptures of the Vaishnavas of Bengal, in the *padâvalis* of Vidyapati and Chandidas, in the supreme pathos of the ever-present hourly and minutely God-consciousness that marked the lives of Shri Chaitanya and his followers, the seven Gosvamis that rediscovered and re-established Brindavana. Every particle of the dust of Brindavana in the eyes of these Vaishnavas is more precious than refined gold, having once been sanctified by the touch of the lotus-feet of Shri Krishna and the associates of His Divine sport on earth.

It is this Krishna-consciousness that Vaishnava devotees to this day seek to make a thing of permanent inner realization; it is to them the *summum bonum* of life—beside which even salvation or *moksha* is no more to be coveted than the pleasures of this world. It is this yearning that finds expression in such *shlokas* as the following:

> When will my eyes be suffused with the stream of tears, my voice choked with words barred by the gathering moisture, and my body, all over, covered with the horripilation of joy at the remembrance of the name of Hari?

In this spiritual mood the Vaishnava visualizes the glory of Brindavana and feels that the highest ends of human existence are realized by living there even as a plant, a creeper, a shrub. As the *Bhâgavata* has it :

> How shall I be anything in Brindavana, a shrub or creeper or plant upon which at one time the dust of the feet of the blessed milkmaids had lighted—the dust of the feet of those who abandoned all their kin and the path of life accounted worthy (both of which are with difficulty eschewed) and sought the way of the Lord Mukunda in the quest of which the sages are ever absorbed?

Multiform Personality

The personality of Shri Krishna has many, almost inexhaustible, aspects; and these were revealed in the different stages of His mundane career at Brindavana, at Mathura, at Dwaraka, at the *Râjasuya* of Yudhishthira, and at Kurukshetra. And the teachings that these stages yield are as varied as they are rich. We have in them Krishna as the *alter ego* of the simple common man, as the wielder of majesty, as the king and statesman, as the Divine Personage, as the promulgator of the

highest wisdom and *dharma* or the law of righteousness. Series of discourses may be given, as they are to this day given all over India, on these several phases of His being and teachings. Libraries have gathered round these topics, and books are still multiplying; for the fascination of this personality and His message is truly imperishable. A convenient summing up of the different aspects is found in the famous hymn of Bhishma in the first *skandha* of the *Bhâgavata*. Pierced all through by barbed shafts the celebate hero of the *Mahâbhârata* is lying on his arrow-bed in the battle-field. In this state he reveals the wisdom that his life of immaculate purity, sturdy heroism, and incomparable self-sacrifice and integrity has unfolded to him. And knowing his departure to be near, he hymns Shri Krishna, his adversary and withal the god of his adoration, in verses that throb with fervid devotion and glowing poetry :

I dedicate my heart to that perfect Man of the Sâttvata race who is the sole origin of all forms of greatness, who is now present before my eyes as a body of joy, and who, though He has recourse to *Nature* that is the source of the perennial stream of creation, for the play of His Divine powers, is yet not dependent on her.

May I have selfless devotion to Shri Krishna, Pârtha's charioteer, whose entrancing figure the three worlds are eager to view, when, as now, He appears with His person dark as the *tamâla*, and clad in yellow robes which shine like the rays of the morning sun and with His lotus-face overhung with glossy locks of hair.

May my soul be absorbed in meditation of the Lord Krishna whose majesty is enhanced by His armour pierced again and again by my sharp arrows and whose locks of hair swaying this way and that, as He impetuously drives His chariot in the fight, are wet with drops of perspiration and dimmed by the dust springing up from the horses' hoofs.

May I have devotion to Krishna, Pârtha's charioteer, who at the importunity of His friend Arjuna stopped his chariot between the two warring Kuru and Pândava hordes and who by His destructive glances took away the lives of the forces opposed.

When Arjuna was about to shrink from fight upon a survey of the hostile chiefs lest he should incur the sin of killing his kith and kin, the Supreme Being gave him the knowledge of the soul in the form of the Gita (Song Divine) and dispelled his misguided impulse—may I be devoted to the feet of that highest personality.

In disregard of his own unalterable promise which was inviolable as the Vedas and to fulfil my vow, He, the terrible disc-bearer, though seated in the chariot, shook the earth as He descended on it and heeded not His scarf which slipped from His person. And when He was wounded by my sharp arrows and bespattered with blood all over, not for a moment did He turn to glance at it but rushed again towards me, his enemy, even as a lion makes for a royal elephant—may that Lord Mukunda be my refuge.

May I, while dying, adore that Supreme Being of inconceivable majesty who, though continuously engaged in guarding the chariot of Pârtha as His dearest of kin and reining the horses and indescribably beautiful to behold amidst the beauty of the chariot, bestowed on the heroes that died on the field of battle the salvation that comes through the vision of the Beatific Presence.

By His graceful gait, charming manner, sweet smile, attractive looks and such other marks of loving regard, the milkmaids were filled with a proud sense of identity with Him and proceeded to imitate His sportive ways, and as a result thereof reaped the perfection of love which constitutes his true being—that Soul of my soul is now present before my eyes.

He who drew the look of admiration of all in the hall of assembly at the royal sacrifice of Yudhishthira amidst the crowd of sages and exalted princes and received worship from them—that Supreme Soul is now visible to my eyes.

Free from the sense of separateness, I have attained that beginningless Supreme Person who dwells separately in the heart of everyone of His created beings even as the one sun is viewed as different by every several beholder.

In these eleven stanzas, as perhaps nowhere else, the personality of Shri Krishna—varied and multiform—is outlined within the briefest compass. In them we have glimpses of the many aspects of this superb and unique personality. Shri Krishna is the Creator, immanent and transcendent. 'पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि— all creation is a quarter of Him. The imperishable three-quarters are in Heaven.' He is the adored idol of the soul, He is the warrior in the battle-field, He is the destroyer whose very look withers the creation,

He is the promulgator of *dharma* and the illuminator of the soul. He views with an indifferent eye both friends and foes and in His abounding grace He is the redeemer of all. He is the god of love, the companion and play-fellow of the cowboys and milkmaids of Brindavana. He is the unique and supreme object of universal worship. He is the being to whom utter resignation and self-surrender conduce to the highest well-being of all creatures. His figure pervades and enfolds within itself the universe. Vast and immeasurable, He transcends the farthest reach of human conception. He is the minutest of minute objects and is yet the greatest of the great—'**अणोरणीयान् महतो महीयान्**'.

Mystery of Incarnation

The *Bhâgavata* explains the mystery of incarnation in these *shlokas*:

> While lying on the waters in His mystic slumber, out of the lotus that sprang from His navel-fount, Brahmâ, the Lord of the progenitors of the universe, was born.
> That form of the Supreme Lord consists of pure and potent energy, and the expanse of worlds was devised and made from the disposition of limbs in this form.
> The Yogis by their Divine sight see that wonderful form with its thousand feet, thighs, arms, faces, and thousand heads, ears, eyes, and noses, glittering attires, diadems, and ear-rings.
> This is the store-house and seed imperishable of various *avatâras* (incarnations) from a fraction of whose part gods, the lower species of animals, and men are created.

But the advent of Krishna in which humanity is most deeply interested is the advent in the individual's soul, the awakening of living God-consciousness and the establishment of personal relationship. Hence the unbroken spell that the Brindavana episode, the symbolism and allegory underlying the Râdhâ-Krishna cult have exercised through the ages. Hence the highest veneration that is paid to the gospel of the Gita in which the teachings of the Upanishads and the schools of philosophy are synthesized; and the rule of life for the devout Hindu, and the solution of the mystery of existence and the enigma of man's duty are laid down.

At Nathadwara, in the heart of arid Mewar, the image that Mirabai adored with a passionate devotion, in a trance of poignant yearnings, raptures, and exaltations, is now installed and worshipped with a splendour of ceremonies, the like of which is rarely witnessed. Nathadwara is the seat of the Gossains who trace their lineage from Vallabhacharya and who command an extensive following among the Vaishnavas of the North and West of Hindusthan. Shri Krishna in the attitude of Giridhâri, the lifter of the Govardhana hill, receives, in this garden amidst a desert, an adoration which only centuries of devotion, religious culture, sense of beauty and refinement, and abundant material resources could have evolved and maintained: choicest flowers, richest presents, incense, and music and song make up the ever-varying round of rites that are performed before a deity that at no two times is the same in appearance or costume or jewellery. And what else could be expected about the worship of the Lord whose service is joy and who demands of his devotees not the austere virtues but self-dedication and self-surrender, utter devotion and constant remembrance of His boundless grace and goodness to His creatures? These changes of raiment and attitude are effected, however, by a curious art on a slab of flat stone black as ebony set up erect in a dark chamber. For the Ancient of Days resides in a cave, in the depth of a hollow, the unfathomed recesses of the soul of man, difficult to visualize, hidden and immanent in all: '**तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गह्वरेष्ठं पुराणम्**'. In different epochs of the world, says the *Bhâgavata*, three were the colours of the Deity when assuming the human mould—white and red and yellow. In the present age, however, the colour has changed into black. Black is the absence or the negation of colour. And

who can predicate an attribute that is positive of the one of whom the Vedas speak with bated breath and in describing whom the Upanishads merely spin a web of contradictions?

Without hands and feet, He is speedy in gait and can seize. Eyeless He sees and earless He hears. He knows all that is knowable but of Him there is no knower. He is the perfect person, infinite ancient being.

Words that denote only negatives are the symbols which express His nature. His form is not within the range of vision. No one sees Him with the eye. Those that know this indweller of the heart with their heart and mind, attain immortality. But these contradictions instead of shaking the reality only strengthen it. For the Divine Being is He in whom all contradictions find their ultimate solution. He is the synthesis *ne plus ultra*, the harmony that comprehends the farthest extremes of opposition.

Human Form Divine

It might be urged against the conception of Shri Krishna that it is, like most other conceptions of the Ultimate Reality, anthropomorphic, that he is a God that devout man has created in his own image. But the argument avails but poorly; for it ignores the initial postulate and basic condition of all our knowledge and feeling and faith that it is before and above all human knowledge, human faith, human feeling; and to get rid of this context, this universe of discourse, is to hang in the inane. To kick away this footstool is like cutting away the ground under our feet and to incur a descent into an abysm such as Milton describes. Hence anthropomorphism is neither a valid objection nor a sound reproach. Philosophy in the last analysis tells us that the mind has regained from Nature that which the mind has put into Nature, that the stuff of the world is mind-stuff. To a scientist God is a mathematician. To a poet he is the first among the poets. To the architect he is the supreme architect, to the engineer the arch-engineer. The scientific philosopher of modern times realizes that the universe is a thought in the Mind of God. Hemmed in by these unscalable walls we are truly like the musk-deer that runs about in quest of the smell that has its source in its own navel. And so the Vaishnavas tell us that countless as are the manifestations of God, the best and highest of all these is the Human Form Divine. For in this form the potency of the Deity to touch and move and direct and inspire the devotee reaches the maximum level.

There is a *shloka* which says that through the power of the devotee's austerities, the intensity of worship, and the beauty of the image, the Deity appears before and beside the worshipper. And Shri Krishna today, as through the last three millennia, is a living reality to those who have sought refuge in Him and who meditate on Him, who thirst and hunger after Him, who feel most poignantly the utter desolation of the lot of man when separated from Him.

The twinkling of the eye lengthens into an age, the eyes shower tears like rain-clouds, the universe becomes a blank, a vacuum through separation from Govinda.

This intense, intimate, ever-present God-consciousness comes not only to the devotee but also to the individual who emphatically denies Him and resolutely opposes His Will. The *Bhâgavata* in describing the agonies of Kamsa, when bent on killing the unborn Shri Krishna and yet in terror lest he should be surprised at any time by the Awful Being, says:

Seated or lying, standing still or eating or walking on the earth, always thinking of the Lord who commands all the senses, he saw the world filled with His images.

THE MESSAGE OF SHRI KRISHNA

By Brahmachari Satyakrishna

There is a great controversy regarding the historicity of many of the most remarkable prophets and seers. Yet, it is a matter of experience that a mere recalling of some of the incidents of such a life, the very sight of a picture depicting some particular feature of their personality, a simple utterance or sound of any of their names restore peace in troubles, bring light in the dark night of the soul, enkindle the hearts and enliven the minds. These proper names are, therefore, not mere meaningless words. They are immensely powerful and vibrant with life—living because they bestow the joy of life, elevate man from the petty trivialities of the temporal, and flood our life with the light of Divinity when the darkness of ignorance makes it a meaningless burden. These hallowed names have a universal appeal; for they represent some ideal personalities, some characters to be strenuously emulated. Shri Krishna's is one of such names.

Shri Krishna was born within the prison walls of Kamsa, who was the embodiment of the materialistic outlook and *âsuri sampads* (demoniacal tendencies). Shri Krishna was born to dispel the darkness of ignorance which had then clouded men's minds. It was God's descent to the mortal world to save humanity from destruction. When evil prevailed upon earth, when Truth had been forgotten and life had become a sinful burden, Shri Krishna incarnated as the Saviour of humanity. He himself said :

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

There may be doubts as to whether Shri Krishna was a historical figure or not. But the unique and universal message attributed to him still remains. The great philosophy expounded by him still guides the wayfarers in this wilderness of the world. He is the inspirer of *sannyâsins* as well as the ideal of the householders. He is the greatest, the boldest preacher of morality, the greatest *karma yogi* devoted to the most energetic activity while poised in perfect equanimity. His life was the living example of non-attachment—which according to great thinkers is the ideal of life. He did not care for a throne, though he did not shrink from a righteous war when occasion demanded it. Krishna stands for the infinite in the finite, the God in man, concealed within the folds of flesh and the powers of sense. He was the great harmonizer of the *Mahâbhârata* era. He came to resolve the conflicts of sects and breathe into all spiritual paths—*jnâna*, *karma*, *bhakti*, and *yoga* —life, vigour, and conviction. He said, 'In me they are all strung like pearls upon a thread.'

'I challenge any one to show whether these things, these ideals—work for work's sake, love for love's sake, duty for duty's sake—were not original ideas with Krishna'—says Swami Vivekananda. To know Shri Krishna, to understand the significance of his incarnation, to appreciate his greatness we have to study and understand the Gita —the message of Shri Krishna, the essence of the Upanishads. His message in the Gita is a 'deliberately intellectual solution of the problems of life. It is designed to meet a situation complicated by troubles of conscience and confusion of mind.' It conveys the lessons of philosophy, religion, work, and ethics. Its appeal is not for its force of thought and majesty of vision but for its fervour of devotion, depth of insight, regard for truth, and sweetness of spiritual emotion.

The teacher of the Gita is God descended into humanity. And the disciple is the representative man at a great crisis of life. The disciple comes to the battle-field with full faith in the righteousness of his cause. But, then, he is confused. The thought of killing his own kith and kin, worthy of love and adoration, and the other consequences of war excites a false philosophy in his mind. He has the feeling of a void; there is in his heart a sort of frustration exciting a sense of unreality of things. He prepares himself to repudiate his life. He is at a loss to discriminate between *shreya* and *preya*, the Divine and the mundane. His conscience is troubled, his heart is torn with anguish, and he prays: 'With my nature overpowered by weak commiseration, with a mind in confusion about duty, I supplicate Thee. Say decidedly what is good for me; I am Thy disciple. Instruct me who have taken refuge in Thee.' His cry is symbolic of the tragedy of life. It is a dark night of the soul. The battle of Kurukshetra is the symbol of the life of the struggling soul to manifest itself, and the Kauravas are the enemies who impede the progress of the soul. 'Arjuna tries to evade the rigorous ordeal by subtle arguments and specious excuses. Krishna stands for the voice of God, delivering his message in thrilling notes, warning Arjuna against dejection of spirit.' We have here a great insight into the heart of man—its conflicts of motives, the crude counsels of silent selfishness, and the subtle whisperings of the Evil One. Here comes Shri Krishna to Arjuna, who typifies the struggling individual—oppressed by his burden and bewildered by the mystery of the world—with the encouraging words: 'Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Prithâ! Ill doth it become thee. Cast off this mean faint-heartedness and arise, O scorcher of thine enemies!' He destroys the illusion of Arjuna. The Lord calls upon him not to mourn for them who should not be mourned for, since 'the wise grieve neither for the living nor the dead.' As a result of such teaching Arjuna understands that the essential thing in man is not the body or the sense, but the changeless spirit. The mind of the disciple is switched on to a new path. The climax brings before our eyes an interview between God and man—the Real Self and the apparent self. The teacher is at once human and Divine. He is the God of beauty, truth, knowledge, and love.

Shri Krishna opens the way to all the winds that blow when he says, 'In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way do I fulfil their desires. My path, O son of Prithâ, men tread, in all ways.' The Gita is not narrow, sectarian, or fanatically dogmatic in its assertions; it is a universal song addressing all sects, confirming all schools; it sympathizes with all forms of worship and thus sings aloud the true spirit of Hinduism which is unwilling to break up culture into compartments and treat other forms of thought and practices in a spirit of negation. Shri Krishna synthesizes in his message the apparently heterogeneous elements—Upanishadic intuition of soul, Samkhya doctrine of freeing oneself from contact with Nature, Mimamsa view of fulfilling our duties, the way of devotional feeling, and the Yoga system. Some persons may fail to understand the glory of Shri Krishna with the flute and garland playing and dancing with the Gopis, others may laugh to see the worship of the Baby Krishna (Gopâla); there may be still others who would like to deride the worship of Shri Krishna—the God of love, the God of affection, and the God of Supreme Powers—as the emotional effusion of the undeveloped and weak mind. But even the most critical and philosophic mind will bow down before Shri Krishna the harmonizer of sects, the synthesizer of faiths, the bestower of bliss, the upholder of truth, the standard-bearer of higher values—the

Rishi of the Gita—call him man, superman, or God-incarnate.

Nevertheless, Shri Krishna is the embodiment of love. He lays special stress on intense love for and devotion to God as aid to spiritual unfoldment. The significance of the incidents connected with the infant Krishna and the immaculate relationship between Shri Krishna and the Gopis illustrate Divine love expressed in different forms. To Yashodâ the God of Love was her own child Krishna; to the cowherd boys Krishna was their beloved friend and playmate; and to the Gopis Krishna was their beloved friend, lover, and companion. Addressing his dear disciple Uddhava he says:

'Many are the means described for the attainment of the highest good, such as love, performance of duty, self-control, truthfulness, sacrifices, gifts, austerity, charity, vows, observance of moral precepts. I could name more. But of all I could name, verily, love is the highest: love and devotion that make one forgetful of everything else, love that unites the lover with Me. Once that joy of love is realized all earthly pleasures fade into nothingness.

'Neither by Yoga, nor by philosophy, nor by deeds, nor by study, nor by austerity, nor even by renunciation of desires, am I easily attained. Those only who have pure love for me find me easily. I, the Self, dear to the devotee, am attainable by love and devotion. Devotion to me purifies even the lowliest of the low.'

Shri Krishna appeared more than five thousand years ago when evil was reigning supreme over man, and hatred, jealousy, and such other vices were overlording him, to re-establish righteousness, love, and peace on earth. The world has passed through such crises at different periods. Today we are once again at an hour of dark bewilderment and spiritual degradation. Shri Krishna's analysis of the non-Divine character at once brings before our eyes the picture of the dictators and imperialists of our own times who say,

'That enemy has been slain by me, and others also shall I slay. I am the Lord, I enjoy, I am successful, powerful, and happy. I am rich and well-born. Who else is equal to me? I will sacrifice, I will give, I will rejoice.'

Is not this the language in which the war-lords of the modern world speak? Human nature seems to be the same always. It is a combination of good and evil. And humanity is at a great risk of losing its greatness when the Divine is dethroned from man's heart and the non-Divine is installed instead. For, with the advent of the non-Divine, greed, passion, lust, and anger become the springs of action leading to the degradation of man into animal which consequently results in a chaos. Are we not in a similar confusion today? Shri Krishna saved humanity from its imminent crisis in the past by turning the torch on the higher values and aspects of life, by reawakening the living God in man, and by rekindling the lamp of Light in man's heart. And thus his *Song Celestial*, sung hundreds of years ago, is an urgent message to present-day humanity as well and is calculated to make an end of the present unrest if it is honestly followed. For his message will open up a new avenue of life. It will strengthen man to become Rishi—*sthitaprajna*. It will teach us to see things *sub-specie-eternetatis*. And as soon as we begin to see things from such a high and noble view-point peace and love will be ours.

Shri Krishna's mission on earth was to formulate the science of life which enables us to transcend the limitations of flesh and which brings us mental peace and equilibrium in spite of the unceasing conflicts and miseries around. Following Shri Krishna's teachings the lower man is metamorphosed into the higher. Man knows his own Self. He begins to feel the identity with the Divine. Nay, man becomes God, a *jivanmukta*. Like all other prophets this was the mission of Shri Krishna's life—to give man the super-sensuous insight into the Lord's supreme glory

beyond the mysterious veil of *mâyâ*. Arjuna realized the truth and threw off the veil of *mâyâ* after a vision of *vishvarupa*. The nature of the world which is a combination of reality and unreality was vouchsafed to him by the infinite grace of Shri Krishna. And finally he surrendered, saying, 'Destroyed is my delusion, and I have gained my memory through Thy grace, O Achyuta, I am firm; my doubts are gone. I will follow Thy word.'

It is not that truth was revealed only once to Arjuna and will never be revealed again to anyone else. Contrarily, truth is our common possession. It is for us to knock and the doors will be opened unto us. The burden will fall off from us as well. If there is that sincerity of purpose, that earnestness to see God, that intense love for God, that infinite faith in and devotion to God which Arjuna had, then surely truth will be revealed to us. Hark! Shri Krishna assures his devotees unequivocally:

'He who sees Me in all things, and sees all things in Me, never becomes separated from Me, nor do I become separated from him. . . . O son of Kunti, do thou proclaim boldly that My devotee is never destroyed.'

TRANCE, SAMADHI, AND VISIONS

By Swami Saradananda

IV

We cannot resist the temptation of citing another incident illustrative of the Master's realization of the non-dualistic state. The Master was then seriously ill at the Cossipore garden house. Pundit Shashadhara Tarkachudamani came with some others to visit him. In course of the talk the pundit told the Master, 'Sir, the scriptures declare that persons like you can cure their diseases at will. If the mind is concentrated for some time on the ailing limb with the desire that it should get cured, the disease soon leaves. Can't you please try that?' The Master replied, 'How can you, who are a pundit, ever make such a suggestion? How can I possibly have the inclination to take back the mind that I have offered to Existence-Knowledge-Bliss and concentrate it on this wretched worn-out cage of flesh and bones?'

The pundit was silenced, but not so were Swami Vivekananda and others. No sooner had the pundit left than they pressed the Master hard to do that. They said, 'You will have to cure the disease—for our sake you must do it.'

Master: 'My child, do I really like being agonized by this disease? I certainly want to get rid of it; but does it on that account leave me? It is all in the hands of the Mother whether She will cure me or not.'

Swami Vivekananda: 'Then request the Mother to cure you. She will certainly grant your prayer.'

Master: 'Aren't you all doing that already? But from my mouth that request refuses to come out.'

Swami: 'We won't be put back by that, sir, you will have to pray; for our sake you will have to do that.'

Master: 'Well, I shall try. I shall do so if it is at all possible.'

After a few hours the Swamiji returned and said, 'Sir, did you pray? What's the Mother's reply?'

Master: 'To the Mother I said, "I can't eat anything due to this (pointing to his cancer in the throat), please grant this that I may eat a little." But the Mother replied pointing to you all, "Why? Aren't you eating through all these mouths?" I couldn't speak more for sheer shame.'

What a strange absence of the body-

consciousness! What a firm stand on the non-dualistic state! At that period the daily food of the Master for six months consisted of eight to nine ounces of barley. Even in that condition, as soon as the Mother of the Universe said, 'Why? Aren't you eating through so many mouths?' the Master became mum and hung down his head in shame at the thought: 'What a blasphemy! I have identified myself with this petty body!' Reader, can you ever conceive of such a state?

We were indeed very fortunate in meeting such a wonderful Master. And we had the good luck of witnessing in him a wonderful harmony of knowledge, devotion, meditation, and action, as well as of old and modern beliefs. The Rishis of the Upanishads declare that the true knower of Brahman becomes omniscient and omnipotent—a mere wish or desire of his makes all earthly things submit to his will and change accordingly. So there is nothing strange in the fact that the mind and body of such a person should be completely under his control. It is not within the competence of all and sundry to test that declaration of the Upanishads. But this much we may say that all the power of scrutiny that was vouchsafed to poor intellects like ours, we fully availed of in testing everything concerning the Master. Ever and anon the Master merrily passed all those tests and said smilingly, as though ridiculing us: 'Still this unbelief! Have faith, my child, hold on firmly. He who came as Râma and Krishna is now within this case (pointing to his body); but this time His coming is secret just like a king's visits to his kingdom incognito. As soon as there is cognition and news spreads, the king moves away. It is just like that.'

Many incidents in the life of the Master illustrate for us that declaration of the Upanishads. Generally it is seen that all the mental modifications are known to the subject himself, that is to say, he can have direct and true knowledge of the extensity and intensity of those modifications. Others merely infer them from their outer manifestations. The subjective nature of such modifications is directly perceived by all. All know that the moods are as much modifications or manifestations of mental energy as the thoughts are—they have their emergence and submergence in mind, it is impossible to have them fully represented or pictured in the outside world. But the trances and *samâdhis* of the Master differed in many cases from this general rule. Take for instance one incident. During the period of spiritual practice the Master had planted five sacred trees (called *panchavati*), and wanted to protect the place with a fencing from goats and cows. Soon after this desire, a bore in the Ganges came rushing up carrying with it the necessary bamboo poles, coir, rope, and even a big knife, which were deposited near the place. The Master then had the fencing put up with the help of Bhartabhari, the gardener of the Kâli temple. Or take another illustration. In the course of a discussion with Mathuranath, son-in-law of Rani Rasmany, he said, 'Everything can happen through God's will—a plant that usually bears red flowers can bear white ones.' Mathur denied such a possibility. The next day the Master saw two such flowers on two twigs of the same China rose plant. He broke the branch and carried it with the flowers to Mathuranath. Or consider again a third illustration. No sooner did the thought of practising any of the creeds—Tântric, Vaishnavic, or Islam, etc.—cross his mind than would there come to him an adept in that path to initiate him into it. There is a fourth illustration too. The Master used to call out for his future devotees, and as soon as they arrived he recognized and accepted them. Many are the instances of this kind. On closer scrutiny we can discover this common factor among them, that most of the mental moods of the Master were

not merely thoughts or mental modifications as in ordinary minds. In his case, the physical world would change according to his desire through some unknown mechanism. We stop here by only drawing attention to this truism, which the readers may discuss according to their own light and draw their own conclusions. The facts were as they are related.

We have already stated that for all the time that the Master was not in *nirvikalpa samâdhi*, he was at the threshold of the superconscious state. As a result we find that he established certain relationships with the devotees that came to him, and these he maintained for ever. It is now quite well known how he regarded all women as mothers, who are in reality the special manifestations of the powers of bliss and love of the Mother of the Universe. But the public are still unaware of such personal relationships with the male devotees. Hence it will not be out of place here to say something about this. Generally, the Master divided his devotees into two classes or grades—those who had something of Shiva and those who had something of Vishnu in them. He used to say that these two classes of devotees differ as to their nature, general behaviour, love for spiritual practice, and such other things; and he himself was fully cognizant of these. But it is almost beyond our power to explain those differences to the readers. So the readers may take them to be something like the differences in the types or ideals represented by Shiva and Vishnu; and the devotees were modelled after these two archetypes. The Master had all kinds of relationships with these devotees such as equanimity, humility, friendship, affection, etc. For instance, about Narendranath or Swami Vivekananda he used to say, 'Narendra is as though my father-in-law's house'—that which is in this (showing his body) is like a female, and that which is within him (showing Narendra) is like a male.' Swami Brahmananda or Rakhal, he considered as his own son. He had a similar relationship with some prominent devotees whether householder or *sannyâsin*. And since the Master considered all the devotees as Nârâyanas it goes without saying that he ever maintained an attitude of affability towards all of them. These relationships of the Master were based on the natures of the devotees themselves. For the Master said, 'I can see whatever there is in a man, just as everything in a glass-case is visible.' A man can never hide his own nature. The devotees, therefore, could never act or behave contrary to their natures or estimations of the Master. If anyone behaved otherwise in imitation of someone else, the Master expressed his disapproval and pointed out the mistake. To illustrate, the Master called Girish a Bhairava, for he cognized him as such while in an ecstatic mood in the Kâli temple at Dakshineswar. He used to smile at many of Girish's whims and hard words, for he could discover the wonderfully soft spirit of self-surrender beneath such language. But when another esteemed devotee used such language in imitation of Girish, the Master became sorely vexed and later on explained his mistake to him. With this let us now turn to the topic under discussion.

The Master, standing as he was at the threshold of the superconscious, established such sweet and lasting relationships with his devotees, men or women, in accordance with a real understanding of their spiritual natures. We shall conclude this chapter with some indication of the ways and means, based on those relationships arising from mental dispositions, by which the Master helped the devotees in their paths of God-realization. Soon after coming down from the non-dualistic state the Master began his practices for tasting the spiritual moods of friendship, affection, and love and attained perfection in them. Long after, when many of the devotees had gathered

round him one day, the wish rose in his mind, when in an ecstasy, that the devotees, too, should be blessed with trances, as a consequence of which he prayed to the Mother. Not long after this, some of the devotees began enjoying such ecstasy. In such states their consciousness of the outer world and their bodies became attenuated, and some inner thought-current—for instance meditation on the image of some deity—became so strong that the image, replete with life and light, vividly smiled and talked to them. Such things occurred to these devotees specially during religious music, etc.

The Master had another class of devotees who did not have such visions during music, but had them during meditation. At first they had only visions; but as the meditation deepened, they saw those images moving and talking as well. There were others still, who began with such visions, but with the deepening of meditation no longer had them. But strange it was that, from their very descriptions of their visions and experiences, the Master would know what classes they belonged to, what they really needed, and what would be their next visions, etc. In illustration of this we shall cite only one case. One of our friends (Swami Abhedananda) began a course of meditation, etc., under the Master's guidance and was in the beginning blessed with different visions of his chosen deity, for narrating which to the Master he used to come to Dakshineshwar at frequent intervals. The Master, too, would respond with, 'It is very encouraging,' or 'Do like this,' and so on and so forth. At length the friend saw in meditation that all the images merged in a single deity. This being communicated to the Master, he said, 'Fine! You had had a vision of Vaikuntha. You will have no more visions after this.' Our friend said, 'Matters turned out to be exactly so—I could no more see any image in meditation. Some higher aspect of the Godhead like omnipresence occupied my mind. Not that I did not hanker after and try for such visions, for even then I liked them much, but all my efforts notwithstanding, no more visions were vouchsafed to me.

IS A JIVANMUKTA SUBJECT TO IGNORANCE?

By Swami Prajnanananda

There is a great controversy, whether there remains any trace of nescience in a *jivanmukta* or not. But all the learned authors of the Advaita Vedanta school concur in holding that a *jivanmukta* is a liberated soul who has cut asunder his bonds of individuality and ignorance even while in this life.

'Liberation' is a term which has been differently interpreted by different philosophers. Some say that liberation is a state of absolute bliss where remains no *karma*, *samskâra*, or *ajnâna*, and can be attained in one's lifetime. Others say that it is no doubt a state of super-consciousness and bliss, but it cannot be gained in one's lifetime. *Videhamukti* or the liberation after the dissolution of the material body is the real type of *mukti* (liberation).

But whatever may be the points of dispute about liberation, most of the thinkers of the Advaita school are unanimously of opinion that there remains *prârabdha karma* (i.e., those results of action which have given rise to the present body) for a *jivanmukta*. They say that even a liberated soul is subject to *ajnânalesha* (a trace of nescience) until the death of his body, and due to that *ajnânalesha* he lives, eats, and moves in this phenomenal

world just like an ordinary man. The difference lies in the fact that a *tattva-jnâni* (illumined soul) works not under the dictates of selfish motives, but by the will of the All-merciful like dead leaves carried along by a gust of wind. His individual will then dies, or rather is transformed into the Cosmic Will. His limited ego then breaks down the wall of narrow selfishness, his veil of ignorance is brightened by the ever-effulgent glow of Knowledge Absolute, his doubts are removed, his fetters of passions and desires are torn asunder, and he lives in this world in tune with the Infinite or the World-substratum.

The *ajnânalesha* adhering to the heart of the *jivanmukta* is comparable with a dark shadow on a white canvas. This spot cannot be removed until the death of his body.• But the Advaita Vedantins would say that though it is a spot, it cannot produce any darkness: it can be called a spotless spot. Such is the condition of the *ajnâna* in a *jivanmukta.* It cannot bind him again, but helps him to do disinterested and unselfish work, through which he destroys his *ajnânalesha* or *prârabdha karma* for which his material body persists.

The *ajnânalesha* has been described again by some like the authors of the *Panchadashi*, the writers of the Vivarana School, and others as the residual motion of the potter's wheel. Just as a wheel moves round for a while even after producing the pot, so the body of a *jivanmukta* remains for an indefinite period even after the attainment of the knowledge of the *Âtman.*[1] *Ajnânalesha* is the momentum of the wheel, and it produces no further *karma* for the liberated. *Karma* (or selfish work) becomes entirely dead for a *jivanmukta*, and what appears as *karma* in his life, is but *akarma* or inaction or unattached action of the Bhagavadgita.[2]

Sureshwaracharya in his *Naishkarmasiddhi* has supported this view putting it in a different way: 'Just as the death of an uprooted tree consists in its being dried up, so also the bodily death of a man of self-realization consists in his not engaging any further in actions with a desire.'[3]

The work of a *jivanmukta*, then, is really unselfish. He performs his *karma*, but thinks himself not the agent of it. He works through the inner call or by the will of God.

Nevertheless, there creeps a doubt whether it is logical to admit *prârabdha karma* or *ajnânalesha* in a *jivanmukta.* It is reasonable to hold that though *ajnânalesha* is a faint trace of nescience, insignificant and negligible, yet its existence cannot be wholly denied. We know that the part and the whole of a thing are different only in degree, not in kind. Just as a large fire burns a town to ashes, so a spark of it possesses the same burning power. As a sum total of ignorance has an immense capacity to entangle a man in its meshes, so also has a bit of it proportionately the same power. So will it not be unwise to admit the existence of *ajnânalesha* in a *jivanmukta* who has attained or rather regained Self-knowledge by removing nescience? We also read in the Bhagavadgita: 'ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात् कुरुते तथा —similarly the fire of knowledge burns

[1] दण्डसंयोगनाशेऽपि चक्रभ्रमणावच्च संस्कारानुवृत्तेरविद्यानिवृत्तावपि तत्कार्यानुवृत्तिसंभवात्— *Advaitasiddhi*, p. 890. Sureshwaracharya in his *Naishkarmasiddhi* (IV. 60) has also mentioned a beautiful example of it. He says:

निवृत्तसर्पः सर्पोत्थं यथा कम्पं न मुञ्चति ।
विध्वस्ताखिलमोहोऽपि मोहकार्यं तथात्मवित् ॥

—When a man takes fright on mistaking a stick for a snake, he continues to tremble even when his mistake is corrected. In the same way the man who has attained the true knowledge and has cut off the knot of illusion will continue to perform certain actions.

[2] त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किंचित्करोति सः ॥ IV.20.

[3] तरोरुत्खातमूलस्य शोषेणैव यथा क्षयः ।
तथा बुद्धात्मतत्त्वस्य निवृत्त्यैव तनुक्षयः ॥ IV.61.

to ashes the nescience of a realized soul.' So may we not ask the writers of the school as to how they logically reconcile the existence of *ajnânalesha* in a *jivanmukta* who has completely destroyed his ignorance? Do not the words: 'भस्मसात् कुरुते', i.e., 'burns to ashes,' imply the complete destruction or removal of nescience?

Shankaracharya has also raised this question and answered it in his commentary on the *Chhândogya Upanishad* (VI. xiv. 2). In the commentary on the Gita (IV. 37) he throws light upon the matter in the same way.

It has been well said again in the *Naishkarmasiddhi* (IV. 57, 59), that when the true knowledge once dawns upon the fortunate, it dispels the darkness of ignorance and so cancels the whole world for him, and when knowledge removes ignorance with all its categories, there is left nothing else to be done.

So if we admit *ajnânalesha* even after the complete removal of ignorance, do we not commit the fallacy that there remains an ignorance in knowledge, a something which is not knowledge at all? By liberation or *mukti* we mean the total removal of nescience, and there should not remain the least trace of *ajnâna* in it. Even the body of a *jivanmukta*, as Shankaracharya reminds us, is the outcome of ignorance, and so the author of the *Ratnaprabhâ* clearly comments that in liberation or अशरीरत्वम् nescience is destroyed completely.[4] Therefore there should not be any doubt as to the fact that the destruction of ignorance means the attainment of Knowledge Absolute, and this is the real type of *mukti*. So if we admit even a trace of *ajnâna* in a *jivanmukta* who has regained the kingdom of supreme knowledge, shall we not enter into the fallacy of self-contradiction by saying in effect that there remains ignorance in knowledge?

But the writers of the Advaita school do not admit this. They say that *ajnânalesha* is posited only to explain the *jagadvyavahâra* or everyday dealings in the life of a *jivanmukta*, otherwise there is no necessity for accepting it. They argue that we know that the material body is the outcome of nescience—'भ्रान्तिप्रयुक्तत्वात् सशरीरत्वम्.'—but as a matter of fact a liberated soul appears to live in this world even after finishing his life's journey. His body, the means or instrument of work, remains, and it is also quite natural to assume that as the body persists, its cause, i.e., nescience, continues too. But this is admitted only as an apparent reality, which cannot delude the *jivanmukta* any more; it remains like a dead thing or a colourless shadow.[5] He performs work, but not with any selfish motive. His will and effort are Divine and universal, he does everything for the good of the world— 'परेच्छापूर्वकम्'. Though he feels his body, he knows it to be unreal, and so he transcends all the disharmony, worry, and woe of this world. He appears to live in the body, though he is really unembodied: 'सचक्षुरचक्षुरिव सकर्णोऽकर्ण इव सवागवागिव समना अमना इव सप्राणोऽप्राण इव,' i.e., he lives in God and loves God.[6]

A *jivanmukta* has nicely been described in the Bhagavadgita as a

[4] It should be noted here that the Âchârya and his followers meant by the words 'is destroyed completely' 'destroyed with the exception of *prârabdha karma*', which, having already begun, works itself out in due course (Vide the *Gitâ-Bhâshyam*, IV. 38 and *Brahma-sutras*, IV. i. 15, 18). But the author of the *Brahma-siddhi*, Mandana Mishra, does not accept this view. He says that as the word *'ashariratvam'* really signifies *videhamukti*, so it is reasonable to accept the destruction of *prârabdha karma* too in the case of a liberated soul.

[5] Âchârya Shankara put it in a different way in his commentary on the *Brahma-sutra*, IV. i. 15: अपि च नैवात्र विवदितव्यं ब्रह्मविदः कंचित् कालं ध्रियते न ध्रियत इति।

[6] Swami Abhedananda: *Way to the Blessed Life*, p. 5.

sthitaprajna. In the chapters on *karma*, *bhakti* and *jnâna* (Vide chs. II, XII. 13-19, XIV. 19-26, and XVIII. 55) the state of a *sthitaprajna* has been explained in three ways, of which the state of being beyond the *gunas* is the highest. The state of a *sthitaprajna* is called in the Bhagavadgita *brâhmi-sthiti* or as Madhusudana Saraswati puts it: 'स्थिता निश्चलाऽहं ब्रह्मास्मीति प्रज्ञा यस्य स स्थितप्रज्ञोऽवस्थाद्वयवान्— he who has the realization, "I am the changeless Brahman," is a *sthitaprajna* who is subject to the two states (viz, dream and waking).' In this supra-mundane state the realized soul remains contented in himself, 'आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः'. He realizes his own real essence at that time. He becomes established in Self, *svastha*, i.e., he feels no duality; he stands beyond the boundary lines of light and darkness, where joy and sorrow lose their contrast—'समदुःखसुखः' and he becomes a witness-like player in this world, 'उदासीनवदासीनः'. As the vast ocean is not agitated by the onrush of the water of the rivers, so a *sthitaprajna* remains calm and peaceful in this manifold world of desires.[7] As the mystery of the world remains to him solved for ever, he moves and has his being in blessedness, his *antahkarana* (inner organ) shines in its own glory, no tears and cravings are left for him, and he sees the world as nothing but the reflections of his own shining self. There comes the crowning achievement of his life. He lives as Self-complete and Self-loving at that time.

Madhusudana Saraswati says that when the Divine illumination dawns upon the dark horizon of ignorance in a man, he lives not as before, but everything for him is transformed into its Divine nature, and he never commits any error in his life again: 'तत्त्वज्ञानकाले तु न भ्रमनिमित्तः कश्चिद्व्यवहारः।' Madhusudana Saraswati quotes here a famous line from Sureshwara's *Vârtika*, 'शुद्धे वस्तुनि सिद्धे च कारकव्यापृतिस्तथा'—i.e., there remains no agency of the realized soul in any work when Absolute Reality is realized. He makes his efforts fruitful selflessly and disinterestedly. He keeps awake in knowledge when ordinary men sleep in the night of ignorance, and that which seems to the earth-bound day, appears to him as night.[8] So it can be said that a man of God-consciousness is dead to the world of the ignorant, though really the world remains to him uncontradicted.

It is interesting to mention here that Mandana Mishra, the author of *Brahma-siddhi*, does not recognize a *sthitaprajna* as a liberated soul, but he considers him to be a highly advanced *sâdhaka*.[9] He says that the true state of liberation can be attained only after the dissolution of the mortal frame. He really recognizes the soundness of *sadyamukti* or *videhamukti*. He says that the state of a *jivanmukta*, if it is at all to be admitted, can result only from the persistence of a trace of nescience or *avidyâ-samskâra*. According to him, the *shruti*, 'तस्य तावदेव चिरम्', means that until the *jivanmukta*'s body dissolves, his ignorance persists, after which he becomes Brahman. But this view is not supported by Shankara, Sureshwara, Madhusudana Saraswati, and others.[10]

In the Bhagavadgita (XVIII. 55) Shri Krishna assures us: 'मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम्—knowing me as I really am, they enter into me.' This is an important saying of the Gita where the state of a *jivanmukta* has been explained clearly. Madhusudana Saraswati in commenting on this line says that the real idea of Shri Krishna is that, when nescience and its effect cease

[7] Bhagavadgita, II. 70.

[8] Bhagavadgita, II. 69.

[9] स्थितप्रज्ञस्तावन्न विगलितनिखिलाविद्यः सिद्धः, किंतु साधक एवावस्थाविशेषं प्राप्तः स्यात्। *Brahma-siddhi*, p. 130.

[10] Amalananda in his *Kalpataru* has refuted the view of Mandana.

to exist, the walls of limitations which constrain the apparent life fall down, and then the *sâdhaka* gets into the kingdom of his own real essence.

Madhusudana Saraswati states that, though the Divine knowledge removes nescience, being opposed to it just as light is to darkness, yet as there persists the body of a *jivanmukta*, we shall have to accept the theory of *prârabdha karma*. He says that the admittance of *prârabdha karma* or *ajnânalesha* in the case of a *jivanmukta* is not illogical at all. We know that the Naiyâyikas and the Mimâmsakas object to this point. But it is also a known fact in the case of the Naiyâyikas that they accept the theory of the persistence of a so-called immaterial matter even after the destruction of its cause, the *asamavâyi kârana*.[11] So it is equally logical for the Vedantins to accept the theory of the persistence of the body of a *jivanmukta* even after the destruction of its cause, i.e., nescience.

Madhusudana Saraswati in his celebrated work *Advaita-siddhi* says that though they admit *ajnânalesha* in a *jivanmukta*, yet it is more correct to think of *ajnânalesha* or *avidyâlesha* as a form only, which can be truly described as a formless form or प्रतिभासः, appearance. Ignorance, he holds, will be removed with the dawn of knowledge, though false appearance may persist through some defect, just as the seeing of two moons may persist even after knowing that there is but one moon. There is thus the possibility of the persistence of the appearance of a sublated thing.[12]

It is needless to mention here that Madhusudana Saraswati has also given the right answer to the Mimâmsakas who deny the existence of *ajnânalesha*. Madhusudana quotes a beautiful piece of the *Vârtika*, and says that, just as the Mimâmsakas admit the existence of *apurva* or potential result of *karma* (e.g., an act of sacrificing) even after the accomplishment of a sacrifice, so the Vedantins also admit the persistence of an apparent *ajnânalesha* even after the complete destruction of nescience,[13] and this involves no contradiction.

There is also another controversy as to whether a *jivanmukta* can be ranked with a *trigunâtita* (one who is beyond the three *gunas*, i.e., transcendent). But we read in Anandajnana's commentary upon Shankara's *Vedânta-keshari*: 'स जीवन्मुक्तः शुक्रं शबलं हिरण्यगर्भरूपं पर्यगात् प्राप्तवान्— The *jivanmukta* attains the state of *hiranyagarbha*.' This *hiranyagarbha* really assumes a two-fold nature: *trigunâtita*, transcendent, and *gunayukta*, immanent. The body of this *hiranyagarbha*, the unlimited or Cosmic Intelligence (*samashthi buddhi*) is always transparent and He is all-knowing. He is the medium between Absolute Reality and phenomena. Man's highest reach or appreciation is up to this medium. Above it, is the *avyakta*, the Unmanifested or Undifferentiated Consciousness. The *avyakta* or *ishwara* is the causal or *kârana brahma* whose manifested state is *hiranyagarbha* or *shabala brahma*. As soon as a phenomenal or apparent man reaches this *saguna brahma hiranyagarbha*, he attains *jnananishthâ* (a state of absorption in knowledge), which causes him to be *trigunâtita* also. Madhusudana Saraswati has stated: ज्ञाननिष्ठायाश्च फलं ...जीवन्मुक्तिरिति गुणातीतलक्षणकथनेन प्रपंचिता— from a description of the characteristics of a man beyond the three *gunas*, it is evident that *jivanmukti* is a result of absorption in knowledge.' This seems

[11] तार्किकैरपि हि समवायिकारणनाशाद् द्रव्यनाशमङ्गीकुर्वद्भिः निरुपादानं द्रव्यं क्षणमात्रं तिष्ठतीत्यङ्गीकृतम् ।—*Advaita-brahma-siddhi*, p. 286.

[12] तत्त्वे ज्ञाते द्विचन्द्रादिवद्दोषाद्बाधितानुवृत्तिसंभवाच्च ।—*Avaita-siddhi*, p. 890.

[13] यथा···यागे गतेऽपि यागसूक्ष्मावस्थारूपमपूर्वं यागसफलतानिर्वाहकमङ्गीक्रियते, तथा अज्ञाने गतेऽपि तत्सूक्ष्मावस्थारूपो लेशो देहादिप्रतीत्यनुकूलः स्वीक्रियते ।—*Advaita-siddhi*, p. 892.

to imply that the *jivanmukta* is also *gunâtita*, a conclusion that is very controversial. We find in another place that 'the *jivanmukta* souls, i.e., those who have burst their bonds of individuality and ignorance in this life, are just a stage removed from the *shuddha-sattava ishwara.*' *Ishwara* as *trigunâtita* is different from Brahman. *Ishwara*, as *trigunâtita*, still remembers His feat of having transcended *mâyâ*.[14]

As a conception, *ishwara* is inferior to *turiya* or the fourth. When a blessed *sâdhaka* just transcends the stage of *shuddha-sattva ishwara*, he reaches this terminus which, though spoken of as a stage, is in reality no stage at all, being one with Existence *Itself*, which does not stand in contradiction to any of the three other stages, *jâgrat* (wakening) *svapna* (dream), and *sushupti* (sleep).[15] Here he shines with his own undying glory. From this stage the liberated can communicate with the world, keeping himself entirely separate from it. So as a matter of strict logic, it will be wise to ascribe to a *jivanmukta* the stage of *turiya*.

It should be remembered that the *ishwara* of Advaita Vedanta is different from that of the Purânas and such other schools of thought. The *ishwara* of Advaita Vedanta in His essence is no other than *turiya*, the fourth or the transcendental noumenon itself. It is not the ever-unknown *Thing-in-itself* of Kant. It is not the unity or Absolute of Schelling in which all the features of the world are transformed out of recognition. It is not the Absolute—'a night in which all the cows are black' —of Hegal, or the self-determined and self-grounded ground ego (Absolute) of Fichte. It is not also 'the knowledge of a unity which transcends and yet contains every manifold appearance' of Bradley. It is not even 'the Absolute one which is the transcendence of separability rather than the negation of plurality' of the mystic philosopher Plotinus. But it is pure absolute knowledge, intelligence, and bliss which can be realized as one's own self. In the Vedantic transcendental Absolute, there remains no totality, abstraction, transmuted manifold, or unity of plurality, but It exists as the one without a second.

Whatever may be the controversies, it is accepted by the majority of the Vedantins that liberation in one's lifetime can be attained.[16]

A *jivanmukta* is really free from the illusive bondage of ignorance. As he attains the 'radiance of Eternity,' his 'dome of many-coloured glass' becomes colourless, and his 'dark storm-cloud' is lit up by a constant Divine flash. Âchârya Sureshwara tells us that though a *jivanmukta* sees the world, he sees it unreal 'पश्यति मिथ्यैव', [17] and this seeming duality lasts for him until the destruction of *prârabdha karma*. The author of the *Vivarana* reminds us that even this *prârabdha karma* appears to the liberated as unreal, and in spite of the unreality of the manifold world, it appears to him as a seeming reality. Otherwise, he says, a liberated soul is free both in the God-conscious[18]

[14] Prof. K. C. Bhattâchârya: *Studies in Vedantism*, pp. 35, 38.

[15] '. . . while the experience of the waking state (*jâgrat*) conflicts with those of the dreaming state (*svapna*), and these two again conflict with the state of dreamless sleep (*sushupti*), the transcendent (*turiya*) consciousness conflicts with none of these states and rather acts as the substratum of them all.'—Dr. N. K. Brahma: *Philosophy of Hindu Sâdhanâ*, p. 202.

[16] उत्पन्नात्मावबोधस्य जीवन्मुक्तिः प्रसिध्यति ।··· तदेव श्रुतिस्मृति-पुराणादिष्वाघुष्यमाणा जीवन्मुक्तिः प्रद्वेषमात्रेण नापलपितुं शक्यत इति सिद्धम् ॥ *Chitsukhi*, IV. 12.

[17] Narayendra Saraswati in his *Vârtikâbharana* mentions that a *jivanmukta* really sees duality or diversity; but his outlook or vision is changed altogether. He sees the world is filled with the Divine presence of all-pervading God.

[18] It should be noted here that sometimes we use the term 'super-consciousness' to mean the *turiya* or the transcendent absolute state. But we think it is correct to use instead the term 'God-consciousness'; because the states—sub-conscious, conscious, and super-conscious—belong to the domain of phenomenon.

and conscious states. The residual nescience or *ajnânalesha* which has an empirical existence, is then sublated by the knowledge of Brahman, or it may be said that the *ajnânalesha* remains for him dead and burnt. As a seedling cannot grow out of a burnt seed, so nescience does not possess any power of binding at that time.

If a man knows the real delusive nature of the mirage in the desert, the mirage cannot delude him any more, the mirage may appear to him again and again, but he remains undeluded and in rest. He sees it, but knows it to be false,[19] the mirage appears to him unreal. So in the life of a *jivanmukta* nescience and its effects cannot affect his knowledge, because he has corrected them before by his Divine illumination. Then is really finished his world's journey, and yet he does not despise the world. He turns his compassionate eyes towards it, showers his benediction and goodwill on it, and thus he fulfils his Divine mission. His steps are on the world, but his consciousness is ever strung to the highest transcendental pitch, and he never loses it. He is in full harmony and eternal peace. He makes his body the play-ground of All-merciful God, the World-Soul.

[19] Vide *Panchadashi*, VII. 179.

COMMON SENSE ABOUT KARMA-YOGA

By Swami Pavitrananda

There are some persons who are moved more by the sense of duty than by the necessity of any supplication or prayer to God. They do not wish to see this world in terms of what is to follow after death. To them the present world is real enough and demands one's attention and energy to such an extent that there is no time to indulge in dreams or even in philosophical speculation. They feel they have a duty to themselves, duty to their neighbours, duty to the nation, and, if their heart is expansive enough, duty to the world and humanity. Being of an active temperament—the volitional type—they are always busy with something or other. Hardly have they put one plan into effect, when a hundred others rush into their brains. If they succeed in life, they become great patriots, political leaders, social reformers, philanthropists, scientists, writers, and so on. Their overflowing energy is turned into one or more different channels according to their individual tendencies.

It would be foolish to say that these active workers are outside the domain of God because they do not *formally* worship Him. Many of them are inspired by high idealism, and are honest, sincere, and self-sacrificing. They sometimes possess virtues which any religious man would admire, nay, even long for. From every point of the earth we are equally near to God; and only a narrow-minded fanatic will be able to assert that there is no hope for a person who is outside the fold of an orthodox religion. Every one of our activities is an attempt—often unconscious—to reach Truth or to grasp Reality. If a man if religion sincerely believes that even the footfall of an ant is heard by God, he will not decry those for whom selfless work is the only religion. They may not consciously seek God; but who knows that God might not be seeking them!

There is, however, one difficulty: the power of the human will and the range of human resources are limited. A man cannot always achieve success according to his desire. An Alexander, a Charlemagne, a Napoleon may be big names in history; but in their personal

lives they were failures: they died heart-broken and disappointed. When success came to them in the beginning, they became flushed and elated. Then the Wheel of Fortune turned and failure dogged their steps at every turn. They at last learnt to their cost that in human life even the mightiest have to contend against an Unknown Power which grinds slowly but steadily. They also realized that the human will is not everything and that a time comes when it is humbled to the dust. At first, however, every check to the fulfilment of their desires and ambitions made them angry and unhappy. Every man—good or bad—wants happiness in life. But after struggling for it till the end of his days, he finds that it continually eludes his grasp. The more he struggles for it, the more it recedes; and in the end he realizes that the struggle has been all in vain. Napoleon said with a sigh in his declining years that the Empire he had built 'was built on sands'!

What, after all, is duty? This purely human quality (which Wordsworth, in his puritanical zeal, idealized as the 'stern daughter of the Voice of God'), proceeds at its best from the social sense; and, at its worst, from pride or self-conceit. One cannot remove all the misery from the world. You remove misery in one sphere—if at all you can, it again appears in another sphere. From the dawn of humanity man has been struggling to eliminate suffering from life on this earth; but how far has he succeeded? The answer is given by the continuance, up to our own times, of wars and revolutions involving bloodshed, famine, and pestilence of ever-increasing intensity. Our so-called 'civilization' and 'culture' appear to be only the thin veneer which conceals the rooted savage in man. It is doubtful whether, in spite of his boast of achievement in the fields of science, art, philosophy, etc., modern man is really happier than his ancestor who lived a thousand years ago. This is not an exaggerated idea born of pessimism, but the simple statement of a stern fact, a hard reality which cannot be ignored, however much we may detest it.

Nevertheless man must work. He cannot remain, even for a moment, without some kind of work. If he stops outward activities, his inner activities go on all the same. A man may sometimes long intensely to be in solitude, bereft of all work and responsibilities: but how long can he actually stand that condition? It is all a temporary romance which fades away, alas, too soon. It is said that a man who can live happily in solitude for a very long time is either a saint or a beast. The average man, being neither, is just a human being with all the human weaknesses. He must, therefore, work; he cannot shirk duties and responsibilities.

Karma-Yoga teaches man the secret of work: how to work in such a way that, while achieving the maximum result, he will avoid the pangs of disappointment and despair, and at the same time fulfil the spiritual purpose of life. According to this path of achieving freedom from bondage, the end of any work should be, not so much the attainment of external success, as a training in unselfishness. If a man wants real happiness, he must needs be unselfish. The more one can sacrifice oneself for the sake of others, the greater is one's joy in life. Although this sounds like a paradox, the truth of it has been proved in countless instances all through the ages. It is very doubtful if you can improve the world; but you can certainly improve yourself by means of unselfish work. Karma-Yoga says, 'Work at full speed, with the energy of your whole being; but do not think of the result in terms of success or failure. Avoid being elated at the prospect of success or being oppressed by an anxiety of impending failure: for the sense of success and failure is the outcome of selfishness and egotism—feelings which almost invariably lead to misery. Work like a giant, but be indifferent to the result. If success

comes, that is welcome; if the result is failure, that also does not matter. Finally, if you can, work in a spirit of worship—worship of the Divinity in each man, however wretched.'

Very few people seem to realize that the person who works whole-heartedly but in a spirit of detachment, accomplishes the task in hand far more efficeintly than one who constantly thinks of the result. When a person's sole objective in work is success, the fear of even possible failure worries him so much that he cannot devote his whole energy to the task. One who can be indifferent to success or failure is usually calm and serene; and it is obvious that such a person will work better—especially during a crisis—than one who is always in a feverish anxiety about the result.

One *sure* criterion by which a spiritual life can be judged is unselfishness. The more one grows in spirituality, the more unselfish one becomes. An animal is ordinarily busy only about its own food and comforts. But man thinks about his family, his neighbours, his country. A saint looks on all human beings without any distinction of caste, creed or nationality : the whole world is dear to him, as a manifestation of God. The laws of evolution, in terms of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, are true mainly of the animal kingdom; though even there modern biology has shown the existence of 'mutual aid' as an important principle. If a man wants to ascend higher in the scale of spiritual evolution, self-sacrifice and self-effacement are two of the essential steps. Unfortunately in the West too much emphasis was put during the last century on the theory of the survival of the fittest : with the result that, even today, the average Western man and his Eastern imitator believe they can grow only by elbowing out their neighbours. As a corollary of this, certain nations want to expand by exterminating other nations; and a War Lord is admired and applauded as a great hero, although he typifies only the baser animal instincts on a magnified scale. In the scale of spiritual values however, the man who sacrifices himself and forgives others, lives; while he who thinks only of self-aggrandizement, perishes. Buddha and Christ, although they have passed into legend, are still names which inspire and transform thousands of lives; but the names of Caeser and Napoleon are of interest only to students of history or psychology, as victims of an over-reaching ambition for power and conquest.

But what is the causal relation between unselfishness and the realization of spiritual truths?—it may be pertinently asked. The answer is that it is selfishness that hides Truth from us; that it is egotism that divides man from man and separates him from God. Philosophically speaking, there is only one Existence; but we, in our delusion created by ego-centricity, see It as many. Water contained in separate jars may look different in each jar. But if the jars are broken, it will be found that the water is one and the same. Similarly, when a person's egoism and selfishness are destroyed, he becomes one with the Universal Existence.

A Karma-Yogi, therefore, who strives day by day to be more and more unselfish, is, unknowingly, on the path of the highest religion. Without arguing about philosophy, or even spiritual problems, he steadily proceeds towards the realization of the Supreme Truth. The saying that 'the man who keeps his eyes open and works for the world, is more spiritual than the man who shuts his eyes and tells his beads in his cell', may be perfectly true in certain cases. It may be that the man in the cell, if he is not sufficiently alert, will become more and more self-centred; whereas the man who is ready at any moment to sacrifice his all for the sake of others is fast advancing in spiritual growth. When a Karma-Yogi at last succeeds in becoming completely unselfish, Truth

will be thrust upon him, even though he did not consciously seek it. When weeds have been entirely removed from the surface of a pond, the water in it will thenceforth reflect the moon, whether that was the object of the weed-clearance or not. In any case, the spiritual significance of a true Karma-Yogi is no less—if not more—than that of a *bhakta* who assiduously says his prayers and practises devotions with genuine love.

But one who *works* may not necessarily be devoid of devotional feelings or the spirit of philosophical inquiry. Work can be done in a spirit of *bhakti* or with the outlook of a *jnâni*.

A Karma-Yogi who has deep faith in God will perform his duties as a form of worship. Every work he does is for him an offering to God. The worship which a devotee does in the shrine with flowers and incense, the Karma-Yogi also performs in his own way, though out in the broad world and engaged in manifold duties. He acquires almost the same feeling for God and tries to maintain it in every detail of his allotted task. It is said of Brother Lawrence, a Christian Mystic, that he tried at first to feel and afterwards actually felt the presence of God in the course of all the duties—chiefly menial—that he performed at his monastery throughout the day. The same thing seems to have happened to St. Teresa. Although the head of a big religious Order, she insisted on doing even household duties like cooking. When asked why she did that, she would reply: 'These cooking pots and pans are my instruments of prayer. Through them also I manage to pray.' Some workers of the devotional type try to feel that they are only the instruments of God, that their work is meant to carry out the Lord's Will. But how is one to know that the performance of a particular task is in furtherance of *God's* Will, and not the selfish will of the doer himself? For an answer to this question the day-to-day attitude of the worker must be watched and also the effect of the work on his character and conduct of life should be seen. If the Karma-Yogi performs his daily task in a sincere spirit of *bhakti*, then he must needs begin to feel that his personal will is gradually giving way to the Divine Will. When this feeling at last ripens into actual experience, he enjoys a calm which nothing in the world can disturb.

Some workers of the devotional type try to see the face of God in every one they meet in life. If they work for their children and family, they think they are serving God in those forms. When they nurse the sick and help the needy, they feel they are worshipping God in those forms, that God has thus come before them to receive their offering. A woman once complained to Shri Ramakrishna that she was so much attached to a child that she could not turn her mind to God. The Paramahamsa consoled her and suggested that she should thenceforth consider the child as an embodiment of God. She followed his advice and soon found that her whole attitude had been transformed, and that her love for the child was now of the same quality as her love for God.

To those workers who have a philosophical bent of mind, the advice of the Gita is that they should remember that they are the Self; that it is the senses which work, impelled by past tendencies and desires; while the Self which is their inner being, their real existence, is free from all earthly contact, and transcends everything material. The implication of this sublime and pregnant idea is at first caught only by the imagination; but by constantly dwelling on it, while he works, the imagination of the Karma-Yogi will at last give place to experience and he will realize the Self.

It will thus be seen that there are no watertight compartments among the different Yogas. *Karma*, *bhakti*, and *jnâna* may, and often do, co-mingle with one another in the course of spiritual practice. Only the temperament of

the aspirant will determine which of the three is to have a dominant influence in his life.

Persons who are slaves of worldly desires often glibly assert that they are practising Karma-Yoga in the deluded belief that they work without any personal motive or attachment! They do not realize that the path of a true Karma-Yogi is extremely difficult, and that its success does not depend upon 'wishful thinking', however strong. One can deceive others; one can deceive even one's own self; but one cannot deceive God. Success may be obtained in other walks of life through cleverness or make-belief, but certainly not in the spiritual domain. For genuine progress in any spiritual practice—and Karma-Yoga is no exception—one must needs be perfectly sincere; and at the same time alert, introspective, and capable of detecting the thousand and one tricks that the mind is in the habit of playing with each one of us. Recently, a well-known social worker sent a sum of money, collected by her from various persons, to a Relief Committee. She afterwards bitterly complained that, although the names of her donors were given in the Press, there was no mention of the fact that it was *she* who had collected the money from them. It did not seem to occur to her that such a complaint would naturally give rise to the suspicion that her main object in making the collection was to get her name into the newspapers! This but to cite one concrete instance. Before one can be a true Karma-Yogi, all egoism, even in its most subtle forms, must be stamped out. This requires vigilant care and long practice.

The evil spirit 'Mar' tried to tempt even Lord Buddha while he sat in meditation for the realization of Truth. It tempts also the aspirant who has chosen the path of Karma-Yoga, in various subtle ways. Work, even of the highest type, has got its temptations and intoxications. Some persons plunge themselves into philanthropic and 'social service' activities apparently with the idea of reaping a spiritual harvest; but they easily succumb to the desire for name and fame or for material power. It is often found that they work not for the love of God and His children but to feed their own vanity. In their pride and self-conceit they seem to forget that it is not for an insignificant mortal like man to 'reform' the world, or to correct the mistakes of God! In their hankering for gratitude they do not realize that if man finds an opportunity for service to any living being, it is *he* who should really thank that being for the privilege to serve. A tree is known by its fruits. When a person busily engaged in philanthropic activities is found to have developed no humility, no compassion—in fact, no distinctive attribute of a spiritual outlook, then it is clear that he did not work unselfishly for any spiritual end, but that he worked for some material reward. What is called altruism by such persons is really nothing else but a kind of 'alter-egoism' which usually takes the form of some patronizing service meant to flatter the worker's ego. In the case of certain Western nations this 'alter-egoism' often takes on the familiar name of 'the white man's burden' or 'trusteeship for the backward races', although its real name is 'conquest and exploitation'.

Many a budding Karma-Yogi has been known to have ruined his spiritual progress by collaborating with a leader who, under the guise of religion or reform, was actually engaged in the dangerous game of power-politics. When these unfortunate souls first enter politics, they do so in the sincere hope of doing good to a very large number of people—God's children on earth; but they soon get so deeply entangled in the meshes of power that, in the majority of cases, they find it impossible to extricate themselves. It is such persons who have made religion hated in certain quarters, as being an ally of the 'vested interests' of one sort or another.

Although, in theory, the maxim 'work for work's sake' sounds easy, in actual practice very few can follow it unless they have developed, with the grace of God, an extraordinary power of introspection. Without constant awareness and recollection of the ideal, work tends to become a bondage rather than a help. That is why all great spiritual teachers have advised beginners to combine work with prayer and meditation, and to give as little as possible to external action until such time as they are *fit* to act in the right spirit. A Christian mystic has very aptly said: 'If we have gone far in orison, we shall give much to action; if we are but middlingly advanced in the inward life, we shall give ourselves only moderately to outward life; if we have only a very little inwardness we shall give nothing at all to what is external.'

To a Westernized Bengalee who spoke scornfully of renunciation, and emphasized the necessity for educated young men 'to resort *only* to such acts as will *uplift* the country', Shri Ramakrishna said, among other things, 'Have you seen those tiny crabs that are born in the Ganges just when the rains set in? In this big universe you are even less significant than one of those small creatures. How dare you talk of *helping* the world? . . . Let a man get the authority from God and be endowed with His power; then, and then alone, may he think of doing good to others. A man should first be purged of all egotism. Then alone will the Blissful Mother ask him to work for the world.' The Master also used to say in similar connections, 'Everybody says he is living in the world like King Janaka[1]; but they forget that Janaka had to undergo very hard spiritual practices before he attained success as a great Karma-Yogi. Nowadays, everyone wants to be a Janaka, to obtain the result without paying the price. Self-deception can go no further!' This saint's real attitude towards work has been ably summarized by a commentator as follows: 'Shri Ramakrishna mistrusted philanthropy that presumed to pose as charity. He warned people against it. He saw in most acts of philanthropy nothing but egoism, vanity, a desire for glory, a barren excitement to kill the boredom of life, or an attempt to soothe a guilty conscience. True charity, he taught, is the result of love of service to man in a spirit of worship.'

One of the greatest dangers against which an aspirant treading the difficult path of Karma-Yoga must be constantly on guard, is pride, particularly the pride of virtue, resulting in intolerance of the weakness of others. Even tolerance, according to Swami Vivekananda, is not good enough for a Karma-Yogi; since there is always some element of patronage in one who only tolerates; and patronage invariably means a kind of superiority in the person who gives or helps. If the Karma-Yogi is, therefore, really to serve man 'in a spirit of worship', his attitude must be that of total acceptance. Christ had always greater condemnation for the 'virtuous' Pharisee who prided himself on his righteousness than for the unfortunate sinner. His utterance: 'Judge not, that ye be not judged!' sums up for all time the folly of intolerance. Many a reformer, in his fanatical zeal to save the souls of others, has ended up by becoming, what William Blake called, 'a fiend of Righteousness'!

These, then, are some of the main obstacles that beset the path of Karma-Yoga—perhaps the steepest and the most frequently lost, of the four paths. This is inevitable, because, whereas the *bhakta*, the *jnâni*, and the *râja-yogi* may often be able to forget the world of man, the Karma-Yogi is constantly required to be '*in* the world, but not *of* it'. But there is no need to despair. *Provided* the aspirant is—and continues

[1] An ancient king of India who was a great seer but at the same time held the reins of an important kingdom.

till the end to be humble, sincere, earnest, and persevering, he will, in good time, by the grace of God achieve the same result, through unselfish work, that another may obtain by following a different path.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

We are a little late this month in bringing out the *Prabuddha Bharata* as the 'paper control order' of the Central Government created some difficulty. The present number studies the life and teachings of Shri Krishna from various points of view. Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee's article supplies the philosophical background . . . . Prof. Batuknath Bhattacharya throws light on his life mainly from the religious point of view . . . . Brahmachari Satyakrishna sums up the teachings. . . . And the Editorial emphasizes the synthetic, and universal-cum-individual aspects of his life and teachings. . . . Besides these, Swami Prajnanananda of the Ramakrishna-Vedanta Math has contributed a scholarly article on *Is a Jivanmukta Subject to Ignorance?* . . . *Common Sense about Karma-Yoga* is a chapter from Swami Pavitrananda's forthcoming book *Common Sense about Yoga.*

Charity in India

With the Hindu, charity is almost instinctive, and alms-giving is, for him, of great social and religious significance. In Bhakti-Yoga charity practised in the right attitude of mind is held to be one of the higher virtues leading to spiritual attainment. Westerners are often seen to condemn Indian charity as indiscriminate and prompted by religious fear. Writing in the *Aryan Path* for June 1944, Mr. John Barnabas analyses the various motives that prompt charity, and pleads for a well-organized system of poor relief in India. He rightly feels that in present-day India charity is not practised in the right way, while in ancient India

charity had a religious basis, but was emphatically for the social good; it was not for the benefit of the giver. Whatever good came to him as a result of such charity was unpremeditated.

He wants that the present 'indiscriminate' charity of India should yield place to organized charity as in the West where public relief is administered through legally established societies. Mr. P. J. Thomas observes in the *New Review* for June 1944, that

in India also, no serious beggar problem arose till quite recent times. The old social system made provision for the succour of the poorer members of society and this kept the growth of beggars under check. . . . With the growth of population in recent times and the surging struggle for existence, beggary in India has lately assumed serious proportions. . . . The emergence of capitalism of the modern type has also aggravated the evil. The old social organization has found it difficult to cope with the new situation that has thus arisen.

He also calls for organized poor relief and outlines a scheme for the same based on sound economic principles.

Hindu scriptures enjoin upon every householder the practice of charity in the spirit of worship of God in man with a view to attaining purification of mind. The motive of charity is not to be pity, compassion, or fear, for that only degrades both the giver and the receiver. Practically every religion in the world teaches man to grow unselfish and spiritual through giving freely to the needy as much as lies in one's power without any thought of return. Ancient Indian society though freely practising wide-spread charity, successfully tackled the problem of beggars, through the caste system and the joint family system. In modern times, the mechanical civilization of the West has unsettled Indian social life. The economic exploitation of the masses and

maldistribution of the country's wealth have thrown many out of their resources. Poverty has greatly increased within the last one hundred years. Living cost and taxation have steadily risen, thus straining the resources of middle-class people who consequently have very little to spare for charitable purposes.

It is difficult to make any choice between the so-called 'indiscriminate' charity of India and the legally organized charity of the West. Each has its good side as well as its bad side. While in India the poor are contented to receive what they are given and live a peaceful life, the vagrants in Western countries, unwilling to confine themselves to work-houses and poor-houses, take to anti-social activities necessitating an elaborate system of laws, police, and magistracy. In India the clearest distinction is made between religious mendicancy and professional beggary. The *sannyâsin* who begs his food is held by all in high respect as the custodian of culture and spirituality. Thus beggary in India is not synonymous with vagrancy. Besides, on the whole, the Indian system seems to be more congenial to moral and spiritual growth. Private charity cannot be ruled out of court. But that is no reason why there should not be more organized charity in India for social betterment.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE NATURE OF SELF. SECOND EDITION. BY A. C. MUKERJI, M.A. *Published by K. Mitra, the Indian Press, Ltd., Allahabad. Pp. 403. Price Rs. 7-8.*

The problem of self is one of the most perplexing riddles that has divided philosophers into various warring camps. It is a truism that every act of knowledge presupposes a knower or a self. But what is the real nature of that knower and how is he known—are questions which have engaged the attention of philosophers through ages resulting in diverse theories and doctrines. In the present volume the learned author seeks to develop a new approach to the problem of self which might resolve the numerous difficulties with which it has been riddled. His deep, and none the less extensive, knowledge of both the Indian and Western philosophies stands him in good stead in striking out the theory he propounds. He follows the comparative method, not in the usual historical sense but in a critical way, that has led to clarification of many complicated issues. Elements of originality characterize the method the author has adopted in dealing with his subject.

The book is well planned and represents a valuable contribution to the cause of idealism. It will stimulate and promote philosophical thinking in all who may read it with the care and attention it deserves. We believe that this second edition of the book will be hailed with as much attention as was the first.

SRI KRISHNA AND HIS GOSPEL. BY YOGI SUDDHANANDA BHARATI. *Anbu Nilayam, Ramachandrapuram, Trichy Dist. Pp. 72. Price Re. 1-8 As.*

This is a nice life-sketch of Shri Krishna for school boys. The one-act play—*Tulsi*—shows the great power of Bhakti and will be of special interest to youngsters. The price is rather exorbitant.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION DISTRESS RELIEF WORK IN BENGAL

The after-effects of the great famine have constrained the Ramakrishna Mission to continue their relief activities. But paucity of funds has forced them to conduct their work on a restricted scale. There are still large numbers of famine-stricken people who must have gratuitous doles if they are to survive. There are others who are daily falling an easy prey to various diseases on account of their impaired resistance. There

are still others who are unable to resume their daily normal work owing to a lack of vitality, but who could do a little work to earn their livelihood if some test relief could be organized. Bearing these facts in mind, we have been conducting this second phase of our relief work since February last.

Gratuitous Relief : In the Dacca, Barisal, Faridpur, Hooghly, Khulna, Murshidabad, 24-Parganas, Tippera, and Chittagong districts, since conditions have become worse, we have again begun giving gratuitous doles through 30 centres. This will have to be continued till at least November next. We are glad to say that we have grants of rice for free distribution in the deficit districts from the Government for the next two months. Wherever necessary and possible, we are helping by giving pecuniary help to individuals and families, if rice cannot be arranged or a permanent centre opened.

Medical Relief : Famine has left the people vulnerable to all kinds of diseases, especially malaria, small-pox, cholera, epidemic-dropsy, and dysentery. From our 45 temporary and 20 permanent dispensaries we are distributing medicines and, wherever necessary, diet, etc. Malaria is taking a heavy toll of human lives. We are trying to stem the tide of this fell disease by free distribution of quinine through our different centres. More than 230 lbs. of quinine has already been distributed to about one lakh patients. About 1,14,000 patients have been treated for diseases other than malaria. The Indian Section of the Friends' Ambulance Unit has generously supplied us with some patent medicines for malaria, dysentery, diarrhoea, pneumonia, and fever, and multi-vitamin tablets for general debility. This has enabled us to put our medical relief on a better footing. Milk canteens for infants and their mothers have been opened. Milk and diet are also distributed among the patients.

Test Relief : To stabilize the disturbed state of labour, we have organized test relief work in many of our centres. Carpenters, weavers, fishermen, etc., who were thrown out of employment during the famine, have been reinstated in their works. Small cottage industries like paper-making, cane-work and smithy have been introduced. Works of public utility, such as road-laying and tank excavation, have been taken up, thus affording employment to the able-bodied unemployed.

All these kinds of relief need immediate expansion and intensification if they are to reach a good portion of the suffering people. Unless the public show active sympathy, we shall be very much handicapped in our work for want of funds. So we earnestly appeal to the generous public to contribute liberally to our funds and strengthen our hands in our attempts to cope with the present situation.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

Sd. SWAMI MADHAVANANDA
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission
27. 7. 44

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION DISTRESS RELIEF WORK IN TRAVANCORE STATE

Distress Relief Work is being conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission at Thuravoor, Shertalai, in N. Travancore, which is one of the worst affected areas in the country. Test work in the shape of spinning, weaving and coir-making is being carried on. In spinning 115 people have been trained from 3 different centres. In coir industry about 150 families are employed. From the middle of June to middle of July 1,475 hanks of yarn, 980 yards of cloth, and about 1 ton of coir have been made. Gratuitous doles have also been given to a few families, and an Ayurvedic dispensary has been giving medicine free in the locality to the suffering.

The work is being handicapped for want of funds. We, therefore, appeal to the generous public all over India to help the work with liberal contributions. Contributions may kindly be sent to the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

Sd. SWAMI MADHAVANANDA
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission
27. 7. 44.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX | *SEPTEMBER, 1944* | No. 9



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

PILGRIMAGE AND LOVE OF GOD

By Swami Turiyananda

How far the trip to Badrinarayan is going to be practicable is no doubt a matter for serious thought. It is extremely difficult, and I have seen quite strong and well-built persons on their return looking thin and worn out and far from their old selves again. So you can well imagine how a delicate body like yours will fare. Do not then persons like you go? Not so. Without doubt there is joy even if there be suffering. And it happens, too, that many persons get totally cured of their diseases after this pilgrimage. Wherever you may remain, if you take refuge in the Lord, there will be no more cause for fear. The day is spent to profitable end only if it is spent in contemplation of Him; nothing else is of any good. One should look upon Him as mother, father, brother, friend, and companion, one's near and dear one; if one can have the firm conviction that He is the only near and dear one, one is saved from all fear and gains peace and happiness. There is no other way. It is necessary to resign oneself wholly to His lotus feet. There will be no more worry left then. It is of no avail unless one can give oneself up entirely to Him. Everything is possible through His grace. Always pray to Him, and try your best to act in accordance with your prayer; He is sure to be merciful in that case. His mercy is always there, only we do not feel it. All misery ends when we have the firm conviction that He is good and is doing only good to us.

'In the Vedas and in the *Râmâyana*, in the Purânas and in the *Mahâbhârata*, both in the beginning and in the end and also in the middle the Lord has everywhere been sung.'

There is no other goal but God, for He alone is true and eternal, everything else is false and transient. So reliance on them not only bears no fruit but makes suffering inevitable. But the Lord's *mâyâ* is so strong that it hides this simple truth. So the Lord has pointed out the way saying, 'Whoever takes refuge in me crosses this (ocean of) *mâyâ*.'

There is no other way but taking refuge in Him. 'Take refuge in me alone.' May the Lord through His mercy keep us devoted to His feet. This is our only appeal and sincere prayer to Him.

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE AND SOCIAL WELFARE

By the Editor

I

Hindu scriptures insist that for spiritual guidance a Guru or a spiritual teacher is absolutely necessary. There may be a rare soul that can progress by itself; but, for the generality of aspirants, guidance is unavoidable. This necessity of spiritual guidance is not only admitted by Hinduism but also by other religions and in fact by all people who think rationally. For as in mundane affairs so also in spiritual matters adepts should be allowed to advise, guide, forestall difficulties, and help with necessary equipments. There may be some who challenge even such a truism. For our present purpose we leave them out of our purview and proceed to the sociological bearings of such spiritual ministration. This latter problem, too, is by no means free from controversy, which ranges from utter rejection to the fullest acceptance. Generally speaking, people who have deeply imbibed Western culture, are chary of *guruvâda*, the theory of spiritual guidance, not because it is repugnant to spiritual progress (which question they have no occasion to concern themselves with) but because it works against social mobility, reform, and general well-being; nay, often enough, in their estimation, it is anti-social, irrational, and retrogressive. According to many modern thinkers, therefore, society should get rid of this nightmarish institution. Let us state the reasons for such a position more fully.

To follow a Guru means to surrender oneself heart and soul to him. One has to efface one's personality—all rational thinking, all independent inquiry, all initiative come to a standstill. Following a Guru means following tradition, and tradition is proverbially inimical to progress.

Besides, allegiance to a person engenders an anti-democratic spirit which is the bane of all backward communities. A Guru, in the last analysis, symbolizes privilege, vested interests, and autocratic rule, which are antithetical to the rise of the proletariat. It is notorious that Gurus gravitate towards alliance with the established political order.

Moreover, the guidance of a Guru tends to be all-inclusive in the sense that he not only sees to the disciple's spiritual welfare, but he also extends his influence gradually over a wider range of life's interests, till at last the disciple is totally under his Guru's guidance in all his domestic and public affairs. As, however, in the eyes of a Guru all mundane affairs should subserve spiritual progress, social well-being is assigned a secondary, and very often a negligible, position, so that society stands to lose on all counts inasmuch as no single person can really be equally at home in so many multifarious interests of life. As a result, a person guided by a Guru is bound to suffer and lose in his life's pursuits.

Again, Gurus are often deified in the estimation of their followers. But undeserved worship spoils these false deities, who drag down society along with themselves.

It is also noticed that the Gurus tend to form distinct groups around themselves, which crystallize into exclusive communities waging wars of supremacy over one another. Moreover, these are often at cross purposes with the national State and society as a whole. To crown all this, the Gurus are in time replaced by a hereditary priesthood who mislead society and become mere economic drags.

There are other reasons which we desist from taking into consideration

here, since they are levelled against not really the spiritual teachers but against religion itself, which fact raises a much bigger issue than can be properly dealt with here. We shall, therefore, examine the few objections stated here, and we feel that these among themselves cover most of the ground common to those who oppose spiritual ministration.

II

In our article on *Mysticism as a Social Force* in October, 1942, we dealt with some of the positive contributions made by mystics to social welfare. Hence we shall not repeat here that aspect of the question. The point at issue here is that, though individual mystics may exert all sorts of indirect influence, which society may not consciously take note of, yet when such spiritual stalwarts assume leadership or are recognized as Gurus by others, the matter takes the shape of a social problem. The arguments of modern sociologists, as we have already seen, are directed against the harm accruing from such leadership and are not concerned with the positive benefit resulting therefrom. Our endeavour will be to show that this leadership is not just a negative and avoidable social factor, it is a positive and unavoidable institution which may have its drawbacks, frailties, and foibles, but has also its merits, perfections, and successes. Besides, the arguments against the institution are often overemphasized, since the defects are not peculiar to this alone, but are shared by many others, being due to the weaknesses that men are heir to.

So long as inequality of intellect, environment, and achievement persists, leadership is bound to continue in some form or other. Even in the most democratic countries they talk of the masses and the classes, and though the political stalwarts do not go to the length of dictatorship, they are *leaders* none the less. The masses hang on their words and cluster round their conference tables. Any insubordination is put down with iron hands. The party has its isms, which must not be questioned. Free-thinking is strictly circumscribed by rules and regulations and declarations of policy. When political issues are at stake social predilections must not be too obtrusive—if need be these must be sacrificed for the sake of party cohesion. Such parties are oftener than not very exclusive and often foment political fracas. Occasions are also not rare when party differences reach such a pitch that the integrity of the State is threatened. The party system engenders graft, nepotism, apostasy, and treason.

In comparison with the depths to which political bungling can lead huge sections of humanity, other downfalls pale into insignificance. Matters do not differ intrinsically but only in degrees in other fields of human activity. If, therefore, a case is to be made against religious leadership, it should first be directed against leadership as such. For so long as there is leadership, there will be failures, which will be degrading in proportion as earthly considerations—such as name, fame, pelf, and power—are at stake. In that respect religious leadership is partly free in so far as it is not swayed by these worldly considerations. The remedy lies in raising the moral and spiritual worth of the leaders and the led, and in this respect there is nothing comparable to the ideal spiritual leadership.

Every leadership is subject to misuse, and so is religious leadership. But if the public are thoroughly educated about the qualifications of a true Guru, there will be fewer chances of abuse. The difficulty is that the public, though educated in the accepted sense of the term, are mere babies in matters spiritual. Any dogmatic theory asserted with a certain authoritative tone and show of religiosity can sway them. Besides, they run after miracles, and any promise or possibility of these make them follow swindlers like dumb, driven cattle. As a consequence, when frauds

are exposed, religion incurs public opprobrium along with the fall of false prophets, though when the right type of spiritual leadership is kept in view, not one of the criticisms enunciated earlier can be hurled against it.

III

In speaking of true Gurus the *Mândukya Upanishad* says,

तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् ।
समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठं ॥

* * *

तस्मै स विद्वानुपसन्नाय सम्यक् ।
प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम् ॥

That is to say, a true Guru is one whose life is perfectly regulated by the accepted canons of morality, who is conversant with the highest truths, and who is firmly established in Brahman. These are the minimum qualifications of a Guru, and these are powerful safeguards against misleading. Now, there are three factors in this definition of a Guru, which must be considered separately, for each is replete with social possibilities : a Guru must be morally strong, he must know his own business, and he must be in intimate communion with the Deity.

To take the last factor first, it is senseless to accept anyone as a Guru unless one is Godly and can inspire others to be so. But realization of God is a thing which does not admit of any external proof : it is, as the scriptures put it स्वसंवेद्य, knowable to oneself and not परसंवेद्य, demonstrable to others. When a man asserts that he has seen God, his sincerity, veracity, intelligence, and past history are the only external guarantee that he speaks the truth. So a sociologist, who is bent on an objective study, cannot be sure of this so long as he does not develop the requisite insight, for we have to remember that even in the absence of God-realization these moral and intellectual equipments may easily become the misleading appendages of a spiritual robot which can strike us with wonder but cannot give life. True spirituality comes from above : it cannot be built up from below. Râvana of the *Râmâyana*, for instance, wanted to reach heaven with the help of a ladder, but we know how miserably he failed. His mechanical civilization turned the earth into a hell, whereas the touch of Râma transformed it into heaven.

Nevertheless, a sociologist has to rely on the second factor, i.e., on moral excellence for his guidance, and this for two main reasons. First, goodness is a concomitant of a spiritual life. An aspirant has to pass through a strict moral discipline for attaining Divinity. And though in the highest state he transcends morality, so much so that he may often attach little importance to social norms and forms inasmuch as he rivets his attention on inner sincerity rather than on outer decorum, to true spirit rather than expression, yet when he assumes spiritual leadership, particularly amidst social surroundings, he cannot altogether ignore the long-accepted modes of moral behaviour. For his first task is to speak to the people in the language and through the symbols that are most familiar to them as expressive of well-defined and edifying ideas and things. Secondly, from the point of view of the commonalty who lack the necessary training for recognizing spiritual verities, moral excellence is the surest hall-mark of a spiritual guide.

In the foregoing discussion we have made a distinction between ordinary men of realization, and those among them who assume leadership, for not all can be leaders; and we have conceded that though some men of realization may behave strangely, the Gurus cannot afford to do so in any social *milieu*. We further concede that with particular disciples the Guru may have some esoteric relationships and may lead them to spiritual experiences in strange ways, but he cannot do so with the generality of his followers. In short,

from the sociological point of view a Guru will be a perfect embodiment of moral excellence. This idea is emphasized in the Gita where Shri Krishna says,

One should not unsettle the understanding of the ignorant, attached to action ; the wise one, (himself) steadily acting, should engage (the ignorant) in all work (Gita, III. 26).

We now come to the remaining factor —a Guru should not only be a good man, but also a good medium of transmission of the spirituality he possesses. A good man, or for the matter of that a learned man, need not necessarily be a good teacher. Teaching is both an art and a science in which not all can excel. In comparison with the onerous task of leading others, self-realization is comparatively an easy task. Shri Ramakrishna used to say that for committing suicide a needle may often suffice, but to kill others, one requires a sword, a shield, and many other paraphernalia. A Guru should, therefore, know the science and art of his profession.

We find that when the qualities of a Guru and his task are thus defined, there is little scope for misuse. It will not do to say that morality is a relative thing and that morality has no sure standard of judgement. For apart from social customs there are certain modes of conduct and attitude which are universally recognized as good. In the Vedanta philosophy these have been enumerated thus: restraint of the senses and the mind, indifference to worldly things, endurance, meditation, discrimination, non-attachment to fruits of work, and hankering after salvation. Some of the outer signs of a man of realization are elaborated in the Gita (vide ch. II, *shls.* 55-72), where we come across some of the finest human qualities which all people admire. It will be admitted on all hands that the possession of any one of these qualities is immensely beneficial to society; and when all these are possessed together and pressed into service, the Guru becomes a natural leader, a centre of dynamic social good, by the force of circumstances.

IV

Thus far we have seen that spiritual ministration of the highest order can hardly be subjected to adverse criticism either from the social or individual point of view. But as all scientific truths are subject to misapplication by unworthy persons, so are spiritual truths subject to profanation by selfish or self-deluded persons. Society has every right to be critical of such misappropriation of higher roles. Thus as a true Guru is a fit channel for the descent of Divinity on earth, it is very tempting for ambitious souls to preach and believe that they are Divinely 'commissioned', and thus demand all kinds of immunities, prestiges, and privileges. Society can easily discover these impostors by the emphasis they lay on personal advancement rather than on spiritual growth for the disciples.

There is a second kind of false Gurus who claim omniscience as a natural corollary of their identity with Godhead. For this, however, their foolish followers who want their Guru to do all the thinking for them, are not a little responsible. Thus, often enough, an ill-informed and ill-advised Guru will make the most solemn political declarations, of which he little knows the pros and cons. His assumed omniscience is little short of self-delusion. To get rid of such mischief, society should not unnecessarily mix up different issues. A Guru stands or falls by his spirituality. Even if we grant that he is a very advanced soul in that field, his political or other mundane pronouncements should be judged by standards of the particular fields concerned. If he has political acumen, economic sagacity, or scientific insight, his opinions may be given due weight in those particular fields; otherwise his declarations need not be given any greater weight than commonsense views. All-round growth is a rare thing indeed !

A consideration of the two terms *sarvavid* and *sarvajna* clearly brings to light the distinction we are aiming to make clear here. In commenting on the *Mundaka Upanishad* (I.i.9) Shankara says that though these two terms mean omniscient, there is this distinction that while *sarvajna* means one who knows all things in general, *sarvavid* means one who knows all the particulars as well. Now, this is very important. The point is emphasized in the *Yoga-sutras* as well where we learn that though a Yogi may develop a potentiality for knowing all the particulars, its actualization depends on the concentration of mind on those particulars, that is to say, they have to be learnt individually and specifically; and this few Yogis will condescend to do as they like to concentrate the whole mind on Divinity alone. To expect, therefore, guidance from Gurus on all questions of earthly existence, is highly reprehensible inasmuch as that makes an unholy demand on a holy man, and bespeaks too much of soft-brained reliance on others for personal problems.

Another way of dragging down a Guru is to expect from him miracles. The ordinary people are often thoughtless sensation-mongers. Their eagerness for the supernormal makes insistent demands on the Guru to give proofs of such powers till at last he takes some false steps during weak moments and caters to their curiosity. Nay, the credulity of the followers may even tempt him to make a show of such powers. Society, in such cases, should not tolerate any transgression, and in general the Gurus should be expected to keep within their proper spheres.

The elect are naturally very limited in number. Spirituality is *par excellence* an aristocratic thing. It can neither be subject to mass production nor popular demonstration. Once we do that, spirituality is lost in the process.

A society can best ensure its well-being by creating a favourable atmosphere for the emergence of the elect, or, to put it in another way, the descent of spirituality, at the same time that it trains itself for properly assimilating the higher values; for unless spirituality is vouchsafed from above, society is bound to stagnate and disintegrate. As Aldous Huxley puts it in his *Grey Eminence* (p. 82):

> Where there is no vision, the people perish, . . . if those who are salt of the earth lose their savour, there is nothing to keep that earth disinfected, nothing to prevent it from falling into complete decay. The mystics are the channels through which a little knowledge of reality filters down into our human universe of ignorance and illusion. A totally unmystical world would be a world totally blind and insane.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA*

I

Dear Brother Hari,

What's the matter? K. has sent a long letter. . . . Do please pacify him a little, and write fully what the trouble is. I am relieved to learn that your leg has healed. I am also informed that you are doing good work. . . .

I am in quite good health. The long and short of it is that I fall ill whenever I pay too much attention to the body. At present I cook, eat whatever I get, work day and night—so I am all right and have long sleep!

I shall be in New York within a month.

* Originally written in Bengali.

Has Sarada's magazine[1] stopped publishing? It doesn't come to me nowadays. The *Awakened*,[2] too, seems to have gone to sleep. They don't send it to me any more. Well, the country is being ravaged by plague, and there's no knowing as to who is still alive and who is dead!

By the way, I have a letter from Achu[3] today. He hid himself so long at Ramgarh within the State of the Rajah of Shikar. Somebody told him that Vivekananda had died—so he has written a letter! I am sending him a reply.

I am quite well. Please let me know how you and he are doing.

Yours in service,
VIVEKANANDA

II

Dear Brother Hari,

A bill of lading has come to hand just now from Mr. Banerjee. . . . He has sent rice, pulses, or some such thing. I am forwarding that bill to you. Please hand it over to Miss Waldo. She will take delivery and keep it when it comes.

Next week I shall leave for Chicago, from where I shall proceed to New York.

I am so so. Are K's troubles over or not? Please let me know where you are staying and how you engage yourself.

VIVEKANANDA

III

6 Place Des Etats Unis
Paris, France
13th Aug. 1900

Dear Brother Hari,

Your letter from California has reached me. It's not bad that three persons fell into trances. That, too, is of much help. The Master knows. Let whatever comes happen. He best knows his work; as for ourselves, we are mere servants.

I am sending this letter to San Francisco care of Mrs. Aspinel.

I have just got a little news from New York. They are keeping well. K. is out of the city. Please let me know how you are and what you are doing at San Francisco. Also don't be careless about sending the money to the Math—there must be monthly remittances from Los Angeles and San Francisco.

I am keeping fairly well and shall soon start for England. I am getting news of Sarat. He had recently an attack of dysentery. Others are keeping well. There was hardly any case of malaria this year—the banks of the Ganges are generally free from it. Owing to scarcity of rain, famine is apprehended in Bengal, too, this year.

Brother, go on working under the Mother's blessings. It is a matter between you and the Mother—I am free. I now proceed to take rest.

Yours in service,
VIVEKANANDA

[1] *Udbodhana.*
[2] *Prabuddha Bharata* or *Awakened India.*
[3] A scholarly *sannyâsin* named Achyutananda Saraswati.

COMMON SENSE ABOUT JNANA-YOGA

By Swami Pavitrananda

Among all the uncertainties of the world the most certain thing is death. The fact that no one can escape death, that death awaits every one as the most inevitable thing in life, has disturbed inquiring minds since the beginning of civilization, and has roused in them a desire to solve the mystery of existence by searching for the Reality that transcends both life and death. There are of course persons who are either too light-hearted to undertake such a search, or who consider it to be futile. These go on merrily through life, building 'castles in the air', making plans and nursing hopes, when suddenly there comes a shock. A beloved friend or relation dies. Where has he gone? No one can say. He was working with such zeal and enthusiasm, with never a thought of death; but all of a sudden he drops down; the curtain falls, and he is to be seen no more on the face of the earth. Such a happening sets even a matter-of-fact man of the world thinking: 'Is the world real? If it be real, why does a man suddenly disappear without leaving the slightest trace behind him? And if the call may come at any moment for each one of us to leave the earth, why should we cling so much to our worldly activities? If death be the end of everything, why should we toil so much in life?' Such thoughts may temporarily paralyse one's activities and make one unfit for the world. But is there any doubt that there are good grounds for these disturbing questions?

To the average modern mind the question whether the world is real or unreal conveys no meaning. For him there is absolutely no doubt that the world *is* real. He treads the earth, sees the sun and feels the air: how can any doubt arise that these are not real? Even if the shadow of a doubt does arise, it must be immediately suppressed in order that there may be no hampering of his worldly activities. His philosophy of life is: 'Have ambitions; have newer and newer forms of desires and employ your best energy to fulfil them. Life is full of conflicts and struggles which are ingrained in the very nature of things. Face them boldly; and do not spoil your career by too much of analysis or dreaming!'

But this is asking us to see life in a partial aspect only and not to face it in its completeness. Just as a hare in danger buries its head under the sand and considers itself safe from pursuing dogs, the unthinking pleasure-seeker deludes himself into the belief that he is perfectly secure in his day-to-day existence in the sense-world. He *dare* not think deeply; because, if he did, the result might be alarming. It is a common experience to be frightened at one's own thoughts. But, however much we may avoid thinking, we cannot escape the stern facts of life and death. The Wheel of Nature turns, and brings before us its unending procession of phenomena, whether we like them or not.

A Jnâna-Yogi, however, is not afraid of facing anything in life, or even the spectre of death. He is prepared to see all the aspects of life—pleasant and unpleasant—but, at the same time, he devises means to guard himself against its pitfalls. People glibly say that religious men are afraid of life; but this is far from the truth. Truly religious men are not only not frightened of life, but they also consider death to be only a counterpart of life, and their aim is to go beyond both.

All the activities of man—his desires and ambitions, his hopes and fears—rest on the idea of 'I-ness'. A man

feels: 'I exist; I think; I desire;' and from that feeling starts the wheel of activities of his life. Never for a moment does a man inquire what that 'I' is. If even for five minutes we close our eyes and try to think about this 'I' which is the basis of all our feverish activities, we get into a hopeless difficulty. Hands and feet are not 'I'; eyes and ears are not 'I'; even the mind is not 'I'—for when we say, '*My* mind', we at once admit that we are separate from the mind. Nevertheless, we put so much faith in and build so many hopes on our 'I' and 'Me'! One says some angry word and we get offended; another brings some good tidings and we feel happy. Modern physics is no longer sure whether what we see as solid matter is really material at all; whether, in the last analysis, 'matter' does not reduce itself to thought, or to some symbol. But still there is the illusion of the material world before our eyes. In the same way, though we do not find any solid basis for the 'I' and 'Me', we nevertheless feel all the time that we exist; and it is on this feeling that the whole citadel of our life rests.

Jnâna-Yoga says: 'Reject what is false; and with a keen sense of discrimination seek what is true.' The *jnâni*, like a valiant fighter, refuses to identify himself with anything that is unreal. He analyses everything belonging to the sense-world as '*neti, neti*—not this, not this', and, with a sheer effort of the will, keeps himself unattached to anything that is of a transitory nature. Because he finds on analysis that all earthly desires and relationships possess only a temporary value, he guards himself constantly against the danger of succumbing to their influence. Knowing that his physical body will perish sooner or later, he always tries to kindle in himself the consciousness of his separateness from the body. When a person thus rejects everything that is *not* real, what remains as the residue is the Self or Reality.

Instead of employing straightaway the method of rejection, an aspirant following the path of Jnâna-Yoga may start with a positive idea, viz., that he is the Self as distinguished from the body. In spite of countless failures he repeats to himself this potent idea; until one day his 'cloud of unknowing' suddenly clears away and in a flash he actually realizes that he *is* the Self. At night the stump of a tree is sometimes mistaken for a ghost; but a friend comes along and tells the frightened traveller that it is a tree and not a ghost. The traveller has this idea imprinted upon his mind; and, as he goes near, he finds that what he imagined to be a ghost is in reality nothing but a stump. This illustrates to some extent the process of Jnâna-Yoga.

Anyone who attempts to follow this difficult path must be a fearless spirit endowed with almost a superhuman strength of mind. His body must obey his highest thoughts as spontaneously as a supple twig bends at the touch of the wind. But how many can sincerely say that they possess such courage and strength of spirit—rare qualities that, perhaps once in a century, mark out a Swami Vivekananda from his fellows? The average person, with human weaknesses, finds his actions almost always at variance with his ideals and aspirations. Recognizing this fact, the Gita says: 'Harder is the task for those who aspire after the Unmanifested. Those who have not risen above the body-consciousness will have to suffer if they try to realize the Unmanifested Brahman.'

How difficult it is to eliminate the body-idea! You may repeat a thousand times that you are not body but the Spirit. It requires only a slight headache to draw away all your thoughts again to your perishable body. That is the tragedy of life. The story goes that a patient in a hospital began to repeat the Gita loudly in order to imbibe the idea that he was one with the eternal Brahman; but as soon as the surgeon came with his knife, the

poor man forgot Brahman and began to quake with fear This is the experience of almost all of us in life.

The Hindu scriptures, therefore, enjoin certain preliminary qualifications for those aspiring to practise Jnâna-Yoga. The chief of these are a keen sense of discrimination between the real and the unreal; the absence of a desire for enjoyment of this world or the world to follow; the acquisition of certain powers like control of the mind, control of the senses, the capacity of withdrawing the mind from external objects, the power of physical endurance; supreme faith in one's own power combined with receptiveness to the instructions of the Guru; and, above all, a sincere longing for liberation from the bondage of human existence. No one can deny that these preliminary qualifications, taken together, make an almost impossible demand on the capacity of an average human being. The ordinary mortal is bound to be in despair if he is to be judged by these standards before he is considered fit to practise this form of Yoga. The scriptures, accordingly, suggest that only those who have been able to master these preliminary disciplines in their past lives would have some hope of success in the path of Jnâna-Yoga. However that may be, it is also true that if one, in spite of his past *samskâras*, sincerely and constantly tries to obtain strength from the source of infinite power that lies hidden within every being, there will at last come a time when the spring of all power and strength will be revealed to him and he will be flooded with a great illumination. Even the weary process of acquiring the preliminary virtues will be automatically hastened if the aspirant honestly tries, from day to day, to live up to the conviction that he is the eternal Self, and not the perishable body. It has been proved by experience that all thoughts—good and bad—have a tremendous influence on one's life. If, therefore, you always think yourself to be strong, strength will gradually be developed in you, almost without your being aware of it. In the same way, if one can really imagine oneself to be the timeless Self, a subconscious process will be set up by which the weaknesses of the flesh or of the temporal body will gradually vanish. If an aspirant after Jnâna-Yoga sincerely follows this method and perseveres in it in spite of repeated failures, he is likely to succeed in the long run. The scriptures advise that a disciple should know from a Guru, who has directly realized the Self, the true nature of his being. He should then meditate upon that idea until one day he has himself a direct experience of Reality. This is illustrated by the story that a tiger cub which happened to be brought up among a flock of sheep, came to believe that it was also a sheep. One day a tiger which fell upon the flock was surprised to find a little tiger living with the sheep. When the cub was told that it was *not* a sheep but a tiger, it refused at first to believe this. Then the tiger took the cub to a pond and showed it its reflection in the water along with his own reflection. This at last convinced the cub that it belonged to the same family as the tiger, and removed its obsession that it was a sheep. In the same way, a disciple with the help of a Guru may come to realize that in reality he is not a bundle of flesh, bones, and blood, but the eternal Self.

This does not mean that it is easy for an ordinary mortal to act on the belief that he is the eternal Self. Just as Shri Ramakrishna used to ridicule the claim of some conceited persons that they performed their duties in the spirit of the great Karma-Yogi, King Janaka, so he often exposed the sham of those who pretended they were *jnânis*—at one with the deathless Brahman! There are some who dupe themselves into the belief that, because intrinsically, they are the Self, no bad effects can follow from any wrongful acts they may commit. They console themselves with the

idea that since the world is after all a dream—*mâyâ*, it matters little what they do. In support of their thesis they glibly quote the Gita which says that the Self which is deathless does not kill, nor can it be killed. All war, violence, and bloodshed may be defended on this basis; but that is equivalent to the 'devil quoting the scriptures' for his own purpose! The search for the eternal Self involves a degree of renunciation which no war lord would ever be able to impose on himself; because if he did, he would suffer unbearable agony every time he injured another for his own advancement.

It follows that the hard discipline of Jnâna-Yoga can be successfully undertaken only by a person who is endowed with an exceptionally strong and keenly analytical mind. Without such equipment an aspirant may either make a mess of his whole spiritual life or, what is worse, develop a false, egoistic philosophy of the kind described in the foregoing paragraph. It is not enough for the aspirant to have only an intellectual conviction that the path of Jnâna-Yoga is best suited to his temperament. He must also be prepared to fight out his spiritual battle all alone —in an open field as it were, and under the open sky. He will have to wrestle constantly with human weaknesses and the subtle tricks which the mind always plays in such cases, and will find no respite from the grim struggle until he reaches a state of mind where he is, to some extent, safe.

It must not, however, be thought that this Yoga of Knowledge prohibits or spurns aid from any of the other three Yogas. A budding *jnâni* need not eliminate all elements of *bhakti* from his life. He may actually invoke strength by prayer to God and devotion to his Guru. When, in the beginning, the aspirant longs for light and finds nothing but darkness before him, the help and blessing of a Guru may be his only source of strength and hope. Similarly, unselfish work of some kind, undertaken in the spirit of a Karma-Yogi, may often be a useful preliminary to the practice of Jnâna-Yoga. In the very nature of things it is well-nigh impossible for an average person to embark straightaway on the arduous path of Jnâna-Yoga. He has hundreds of desires and innumerable forms of attachment to pull him back from the straight and narrow course; and it would be foolish to expect him, all at once, to crush such desires or to become completely detached. By engaging himself in some form of activity in the service of his fellow-beings and by cultivating non-attachment, he may gradually rise above desires and attain the degree of self-purification necessary for the practice of Jnâna-Yoga. The greater the self-purification one can achieve, the fitter he will be for the exacting demands of the Yoga of Knowledge. Again, strict control of the mind and a high degree of concentration are essential for the practice of Jnâna-Yoga, and these can best be acquired by the methods prescribed by Râja-Yoga.

A sceptic may well ask: 'Can any man born of the womb of a woman actually realize that he is a bodiless spirit—the eternal Self? Does not the very idea sound impossible and fantastic? Has any human being ever experienced that condition and if so, does history bear testimony to such an experience?' Yes, history does testify, in more than one case, that such a state has come within the domain of human experience. It is said that when Alexander invaded India he came across an old sage whom he wanted to take with him to Greece. But as the wise man refused to accompany the great conqueror, Alexander at first entreated and cajoled him, and at last threatened to take his life if he persisted in his stubbornness. At this the wise man burst out into a fit of loud laughter and said: 'I have never heard a greater lie than that. For you can never kill me who am birthless, deathless, and ever-existent.' This incident has passed

into history and can be found in Greek accounts. Nearer home, and at a later period, the great saint Shankaracharya also realized that unity with the Ultimate Reality which is the final goal of the Yoga of Knowledge, as of the other three Yogas. This philosopher-saint's writings bear ample evidence to the fact of such a realization. Therein, he has analysed and described in great detail the state of super-consciousness of the person who experiences this unitive knowledge of God. It is also beyond doubt that some of Shankara's disciples similarly experienced the truth of his philosophy in actual life. Thus Shankara and other great *jnânis* have not only proved by philosophical reasoning that there is only one Existence on which human ignorance weaves the dream of manifoldness, but have also unmistakably shown that the fact of such an Existence, outside the ambit of time and space, can actually be experienced by a human being possessing the requisite spiritual insight and power.

This experience of the timeless, spaceless Reality must necessarily be beyond thought and speech; for, when there is only the One, who will speak or think about whom? The person who has actually experienced such a state can, after coming down to the normal plane, only vouch for the fact of that experience; but it would not be possible for him to describe, within the limitations of time and space which are now imposed on him, *what* it actually was. Superficially, the highest state experienced by a *jnâni* may be compared to the condition of deep sleep, because when the sleeper awakes, he also cannot describe that condition except as one of complete forgetfulness of the universe. There is, however, a great difference between the two conditions, inasmuch as the man who realized the Ultimate Truth is so transformed by his experience that his every word and action thereafter bespeak the highest wisdom and spiritual insight. A fool goes into deep sleep and comes back a fool; but when a *jnâni* ascends to the highest state of knowledge, he comes down—if at all he can do so—armed with a vision that is of supreme value to humanity.

It has often been asked whether a man can survive the state during which he realizes that he is the Eternal Spirit, and *not* the body or the mind. When a person has transcended the body-idea, it naturally follows that the body will fall off; and it has been recorded that, ordinarily, a *jnâni*, after realizing the Supreme Reality, does not long survive that tremendous experience. There are, however, exceptional beings, like Shankara, who even after the supreme realization retain the noble desire to teach humanity the means of attaining such a state. These souls voluntarily sacrifice the eternal freedom from bondage which they have attained in order to bring salvation to others. To them the portals of the highest experience remain for ever open; but they refuse to enter those gates until they can take along with them some at least of those who, suffering and heavy-laden, struggle hard for light and illumination. These are the great prophets, seers, and mystics who keep the torch of the spirit burning when infinite darkness threatens to envelop humanity. It is they who by simply living arrest, at least for a time, the headlong descent of a weary world into the abyss of ignorance. They are the representatives of God on earth.

MALEBRANCHE AND MODERN PHILOSOPHY

By P. S. Naidu

Among the much neglected contributions of the minor European thinkers to the development of Western thought those of Nicholas Malebranche deserve special mention. It is an error of the first magnitude to look upon the speculations of Malebranche as constituting a half-way house on the road leading from Descartes to Spinoza. One little historical fact is sufficient to overthrow the half-baked hypothesis that Malebranche's metaphysics is merely Spinozism in a nebular form. Spinoza's masterpiece, *The Ethics*, was published ten years before the *Dialogues* of Malebranche, and we have ample evidence to prove that Malebranche was fully acquainted with the fundamentals of Spinoza's speculations. How then can we accuse the French philosopher of having entertained vague ideas which were later clarified by the Spanish mystic?

Contribution to Psychology: Vision

'Malebranche's researches, on the nature of light and colour,' says Professor Dawes Hicks, 'have a distinct title to recognition in the history of physics and his psychological theory of vision is. . . a great advance upon any earlier theory, in some respects even an advance on Berkeley's.' Considering the very imperfect state in which psychological investigations were in those days, it is remarkable that Malebranche should have made such striking discoveries regarding the nature of vision, and the perception of the third dimension.

Helmholtz in his monumental work on *Physiological Optics*, makes three distinct references to Malebranche while giving a historical account of the researches into the perception of depth, and into the influence of the apparent distance on the judgement of absolute size.

Although Malebranche treats of only one sense, vision, yet he deals with it in a manner which is remarkably modern. He discusses the physiological and psychological factors that contribute to the perception of distance. 'The distance of an object is judged according as the intensity of the light and sharpness of the image increases or decreases.'[1] He speaks of the changes in the visual axes and also takes into account the factor of accommodation showing that the idea of space arises from a cooperation of sight and touch sensations. In 1629 he published a pamphlet setting forth his researches on colour perception and visual illusions.

Emotions

Malebranche's theory of emotion is noteworthy. He points out clearly that there can be no 'passion' without the bodily concomitants. He gives a simple tripartite classification of the 'passions'. 'The number of the passions is not to be multiplied according to the number of objects, which are innumerable, but according to the principal relations that can exist between them and us.'[2] On this principle emotions are to be classified into (1) those that incline towards good in general, (2) those that incline us towards particular goods, and (3) those that incline us towards those with whom we live. 'The mother passions are love and hate. These produce the general passions, desire, joy, and sorrow. All other emotions are made up of these.'[3]

[1] Hollander: *In search of the soul.*

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

Attention

Malebranche's treatment of attention is truly remarkable. No doubt his analysis will not appeal to the modern psychologist. But we must remember that he was dealing with the function of attention. 'The discovery of truth can only be made by the labour of attention . . . ' because it is only the labour of attention which has light for its reward. . . . The attention of the intellect is a natural prayer by which we obtain the enlightenment of reason. . . . This labour is at first great, and the recompense scanty, while at the same time, we are increasingly solicited, pressed, agitated by the imagination and the passions, whose inspiration and impulses it is always agreeable to obey. Nevertheless, it is a matter of necessity, we must invoke reason to be enlightened; there is no other way of obtaining light and intelligence but the labour of attention.'[4] Malebranche contends that it is through the concentration of attention that we think away all that is contingent in perception, and attain ultimate clarity in the pure perception of the idea.

In discussing the nature of the 'causes' of action, Malebranche brings out clearly the capacity of attention. God acts in us, it is true, but He acts only by means of general laws. The occasional cause for His action is the group of the particular states of practical consciousness. This group may be designed by the term attention. 'We have', he insisted, 'the power of dwelling upon our motives and impulses, and thus of comparing them with that illumination extended to us in reason or in the conception we have of the Divine order. And through attention we acquire a control over our action.'[5]

Contributions to Epistemology: Essence and Existence

For the first time in the history of philosophy emphasis was laid by Malebranche upon the difficult metaphysical distinction between *existence* and *essence*. Because Descartes and Spinoza failed to draw this distinction they were involved in endless metaphysical tangles. As the result of this distinction, Malebranche constantly kept in view the contrast between the act of cognizing and the content cognized, a contrast which subsequent writers frequently ignored but which is of importance for clear philosophical thinking.

Self-Consciousness

A striking testimony to the originality of Malebranche's speculation is the nature of his reflections upon self-consciousness. The self, he asserts, is never the object of thought. It is only apprehended through feeling. We *feel* the existence of the *soul* and *know* the essence of *objects*. We do not know the essence of the soul, nor do we feel the existence of objects. We may in this connection mention the fact that Malebranche had a clearer grasp of the nature and function of intuition than his predecessors.

Theory of Knowledge

Malebranche's masterpiece, *De la Recherche de la Verite* is in fact a dissertation on the nature and causes of error. After analysing, in his *Recherche*, the capacity of the soul into pure perception, sensuous perception, and volition, and after pointing out that the essence of the soul is thought, which is independent of imagination, sense, and volition, and which can only be felt through the '*sentiment interieur*', Malebranche comes to the conclusion that knowledge is merely our vision of all things in God. Bodies, in themselves, cannot be known, because knowledge can result only from the intimate union of that which is known with the soul; and material bodies cannot come into contact with the immaterial soul. Moreover, the passivity of the soul precludes the possibility of its knowing bodies as they are. Malebranche denies the existence of innate ideas, because the presence of a plurality

4 *Dialogues on Metaphysics* translated by Ginsberg.
5 *Ibid.*

of these innate ideas conflicts with the divine nature. The view of ideas as divine archetypes, which are representative in their function, overcomes this difficulty. But at this point we come across a peculiarly difficult conception. In God, says Malebranche, there is not a plurality of ideas in which all things are seen, but only an intelligible extension. And this extension is present in Him not formally but eminently, that is, in a spiritual manner. Arnauld launches a virulent attack against Malebranche's conception of extension. If we concede that God contains figured extension, then it follows that God Himself is figured. This is not an acceptable conclusion. Hence we have to assume that intelligible extension is present in God only potentially and that there are no actual figures in Him.

Malebranche holds that ideas of extension alone are clearly and distinctly revealed. Hence in our search after truth we should employ the method of the physical sciences. This method consists in analysis and synthesis, in decomposition and composition, by which ideas are first pulverized into their elements and then synthesized into a system which reveals the truth. In such an operation we have only a series of perceptions and no inference. Malebranche reduces knowledge to a mere process of perceiving a plurality of ideas without showing how this diversity contributes to the development of thought.

Malebranche declares that sense perception is not knowledge, but asserts at the same time that there is present in sensation a dim awareness of the occasional cause producing the sensation, and that this dim idea is the archetype of the body causing the sensation. But sense-perception is relative and the idea contained in it is really not the idea of the archetype but is based on the relation between the percepient and the occasional cause. Even so sense-perception can be trusted to give us ideas of the existence of bodies and of their relation to us. It is to establish this type of relative validity of sense-perception that Malebranche brings in occasionalism. But he is arguing in a circle when he bases the validity of natural revelations through sense-perceptions on the doctrine of occasional causes and finds that to distinguish occasional causes he has to assume the validity of natural revelation.

According to Malebranche error is not real. It is only the privation of truth and has no independent nature of its own. Our understanding sees only ideas and so cannot fall into error. Error again does not issue from the will. Error, therefore, is to be found in judgement which arises out of the co-operation of the understanding and the will.

Malebranche accepts the Cartesian principle of certainty, but he shows that what is established by the application of the principle is not self-existence, which can only be apprehended immediately and intuitively, but the existence of the vision of God. Knowledge is thus the revelation in the soul of the ideas contained in God.

Inference finds no place in Malebranche's system, since he does not admit the possibility of development of implication in judgement. We know what we see and what we see are self-identical ideas separated from all others. The discreetness of each pure perception leaves no room for implication. The theory of representative knowledge is established by the doctrine of vision in God. Divine veracity is the guarantee of the truth of representative ideas. But here again Malebranche does not seem to be clear in his notions. Ultimately the guarantee for the truth of ideas is to be found in the faith in sense-perception as natural revelation.

WHY DO WE PRAY ?

By Chunilal Mitra, M.A., B.T.

The Sanskrit rendering of the term prayer is *upâsanâ* whose derivative meaning is approaching God. It is to place our seats near God (*upa-âsana*). Hence worship comes to mean preparing ourselves to be on the same level with God.

But the more fundamental thing is that before approaching God we must first approach ourselves. We must learn to know our own Self. The Socratic dictum 'know thyself' should be the persistent talk of all theologians. In this sense, perhaps, there is hardly found a man—nay, not even a staunch atheist—who does not pray. Every man, of all sects, ranks, and communities, of all climes and ages must pray for something in his retired, pensive, and solitary moments. For in a more concrete and practical sense, praying means attempting to have a hold upon one's inner Self—to have an understanding of one's Self as such and as it-is-in-itself. It is to cancel what one falsely is, and to be what one should be. Because one is not what one should be, one's actual self is at constant collision with one's ideal Self.

Praying, with me, therefore, means not so much approaching God as approaching myself. As He is within and identified with me, He is not an extraneous something in the form of an excrescence. The Vedantic generalizations—'I am Brahman', 'He is Reality,' and 'Thou art That'—mean the same thing. Not only art thou thy petty self, but thou art everything. All things are, because the Self is.

Though praying differs from man to man, country to country, age to age—praying is there everywhere in every being. Not only do we pray, but we cannot but do so. Because, though others may construe my Self as identical with and exhausted in the social, political, individual, or cultural life, yet I know that I am not wholly found in any of these. They are only particular phases of my self-expression. And as the states of consciousness are not myself, I pray to be what I am in reality. I am there in those states to be sure, but I am something more than they. Any arithmetical addition, logical juxtaposition, or statistical conglomeration of facts, ideas, or states cannot give me a total idea of myself—or an idea of my whole Self. Though my private and platform lives are apparently different they are essentially the same. Since, however, my knowledge of myself in active life is obscure, vague, and indefinite, I pray to know myself clearly, intimately, and definitely. I pray to be good, pure, and just, to win the hearts of others and even to be victorious over injustice. In fact, I pray to be everything that is true, good, and beautiful, for the Self is the essence of truth, goodness, and beauty. I am Brahman, though covered by ignorance and imperfection, so I want to be unified with It through knowledge and perfection. The like alone can know the like, and knowledge of the like means progressive unification with it. Besides, I have a hankering for perfection for the like is attracted by the like. So as God is not only omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, but He is everything good, true, and benevolent in their superlatives, I like and pray to be so too. There is another point to note. It is not absolutely necessary to have even an extraneous object of prayer. We may and are able to divide ourselves into two halves, into subject and object—the praying self and the prayed Self, the actual self praying to be the ideal Self. This is

the be-all and end-all of ethics—the alpha and omega of morality. In my weak or wicked moment, angry or greedy mood, I happened to be wrong, unjust and cruel; but I am essentially right, just, and kind; nay, I am not only human and humane but I am also Divine. So I pray to be what I am in reality. Ethics begins and ends with this eternal strife between myself-as-I-am and myself-as-I-should-be. Man seeks an equilibrium, but ever stops short of it. It is a triad movement from thesis to antithesis and thence to synthesis—from affirmation to negation and thence to a higher affirmation. Thus I run towards the cessation of my apparent self, cancellation of my actual self; and when I actually reach that goal, I cease to be my little self and hence there is left none to realize. In that state both morality and religion lose all their urge and value. So, nothing can be more true than this that 'morality aims at the cessation of that which makes it possible'. But on the lower planes praying is not only the eternal quest of man but the urge for the progress of humanity and civilization. Though we pray to be more than what we are, we are what we are at any moment because of our prayer. But for prayer humanity would relapse into barbarity. Thus by praying we are not only doing good to ourselves and others but saving at once ourselves and humanity.

The significance of prayer lies there. But then, to be of any use and fruition, prayer must carry with it our belief in our immense possibility. We cannot pray for anything if we do not think in our heart of hearts that we can be what we pray to be. We must first possess not only the initial capability but the requisite faith in and eagerness for the ideal. Faith presupposes honest preparation and leads to further effort. A student should not pray for his success nor a soldier for his victory if the one has not studied well and the other is not strong enough and fit in the art of warfare. Thus our prayer for something simply because we *like* to get that thing, is nothing but wishful thinking and wild conjecture, if we cannot rely on our capacity to win what we like. True prayer aims at calling up the latent powers of a man. Aptly has it been said that while praying, the devotee addresses himself—he calls for an awakening of his inner veiled being and its dominance over his surface, dirty being.

Besides self-purification, there are other uses of prayer. Praying is needed for the assimilation of the sayings of the scriptures and sages. For mere association with the good or hearing good talks from the saints is not enough. We are to realize those utterances, and for this prayer is of utmost necessity. The Guru may only prescribe the path, but it is up to the pupils to dig up the treasure and enjoy eternal bliss. That is made possible only through prayer.

The Gita tells us that just as nothing is reflected on a dirty mirror, or as fire covered with smoke cannot burn, so our ignorance, greed, and passion cover our knowledge, and make it ineffective.[1] To remove this covering we are to take stock of our purity, innocence, and knowledge through prayer. Scriptural utterances are better understood by deliberation and concentration on them. This may otherwise be called prayer. The Gita further tells us that only one in a thousand craves for knowledge and only one out of a thousand of the latter knows the truth.[2] In short, it falls to the lot of very few to be the possessors of knowledge. It is prayer that makes us immortal heir to this rare possession. Again, the low

1 धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥
(III. 38)

2 मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥
(VII. 3)

and the ignorant follow in the track of the high and the learned.[3] Hence, it is up to the rich, the high, and the literate in our society to see that they are praying both individually and collectively, since, to repeat once again, prayer is not only a means of self-purification but a saviour of ourselves and humanity as a whole. It is the panacea of all ills of our society. It preserves social solidarity through personal integrity.

3 यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ (III. 21)

TRANCE, SAMADHI AND VISIONS

By Swami Saradananda

V

To worshippers of God with form, the Master said, 'While meditating, think as though you are tying your mind to the lotus feet of the Deity with a silken cord, so that it may not rove. I speak of a silken cord, for those feet are very soft.' Again he said, 'Why should one think of the Deity during meditation only and forget Him at other times? Some portion of the mind should for ever be directed that way. Have you not noticed how a sacrificial lamp is kept constantly burning during the worship of Durgâ? There should always be a lamp by the image, which should not be allowed to go out, lest it should bring ill luck to the worshipper. Similarly, placing the Deity on the lotus of the heart, a lamp of meditation should ever be kept burning there. During intervals of domestic work one should look in to see if the light is still burning.'

Again he said, 'Well, in those days, before I sat down to meditation, I imagined as though I was washing clean my mind, for there is a lot of dirt and refuse (thoughts and desires, etc.) in the mind. I imagined, as though I was washing away all that and placing the Deity there. You, too, should do like that.' And so on.

As to thinking on God, with form or without form, Shri Ramakrishna once told us, 'Some proceed to the formless through form, while others attain to form through formlessness.' Once a friend of ours (Devendra Nath Bose) asked the Master at the house of Balaram Bose, 'Sir, which is greater —God with form or God without form?' To this the Master replied, 'There are two conceptions of formlessness—the ideal and the commonsense. The ideal conception of formlessness is undoubtedly the highest; it has to be approached through forms. As for the commonsense conception—it is like seeing everything void on closing the eyes, as in the case of the Brahmos.[1] The Master had besides these another class of followers who as a result of Western education wanted to base their spiritual endeavour on such a commonsense conception of formlessness. The Master warned them against intolerance of all morphological conceptions of God like the Christian missionaries, or denunciation as idolatrous or blind believers of all those who wanted to advance through some concrete image, etc., of God. He said, 'Well, He is not only with form and without form, but much more

[1] Although we narrate this here for the sake of truth, it should not be hastily concluded that the Master denounced the Brahmo Samaj, or the Brahmos. We have heard him off and on uttering the following words while saluting the followers of all creeds, 'Salutation to the modern knowers of Brahma (i.e., the Brahmos)!' It is quite well known now that it was Keshub, the renowned leader of the Brahmo Samaj and a great devotee who first made Shri Ramakrishna known to the public, and it is freely admitted that some of the monastic disciples of Shri Ramakrishna, among whom Swami Vivekananda was the most prominent, were ever indebted to the Brahmo Samaj.

which no one can recount.' 'To explain what God's assumption of form is, it is like the relation between water and ice. Ice is nothing but frozen water, it is nothing but water through and through—it is floating in water and it is water. But, mind you, water has no form, while ice has it. Similarly, as a result of contact with the chill of devotion the ocean of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss freezes and takes on various shapes.' Innumerable indeed are the devotees who, through that illustration of the Master, have attained peace of mind being convinced of the possibility of harmony of these two opposing views of the forms and formlessness of God.

We cannot resist the temptation of relating another incident in this connection. Among those followers of the Master who stuck to the ordinary view of formlessness, Swami Vivekananda was the most prominent, though it must be admitted that he was in the forefront not merely of this group, but he was assigned the first place among all kinds and classes of followers by the Master. Due to his Western education and Brahmo leanings he often made unwitting flings at those who believed in an anthropomorphic God. This was mostly noticeable during discussions. As for the Master, he often out of fun enticed Vivekananda into a heated debate with some one on this very point. Few could successfully face the Swamiji on such occasions; to their chagrin they were nonplussed by his clever arguments. The Master, too, would joyfully relate that to others: 'What a sharp intellect Narendra has! He minced the arguments of so-and-so with perfect ease!' But even the Swamiji was silenced one day in his debate with Girishchandra who believed in God with form. We felt that day as though the Master took Girish's side with a view to strengthening and heightening the latter's belief. However that might have been, one day during a talk with the Master on belief in God, Swamiji decried as blind the faith of those who stood by a God with form. In reply the Master said, 'Well, can you explain to me what you mean by a blind faith? Faith is all bind, how can it have an eye? Either speak of faith or of knowledge. But strangely enough you endow some faiths with sight while others you make blind—what a mess it is all!' Swami Vivekananda later said, 'Truth to say, I was in a quandary that day in explaining the meaning of blind faith. I could not find any sense in that phrase. Realizing that the Master was right I gave up repeating that phrase from that day.'

The Master looked on the ordinary believers in formlessness with the same commiseration as he did on those who believed in forms. To them also he pointed out modes of meditation that would be helpful to progress. He said, 'Well, in those days I thought of God as occupying all space like sea water, and of myself as a fish diving, floating, and swimming in that sea of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. Again, I thought of myself as a pitcher immersed in that water, and Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss permeating me through and through.' Again he said, 'Before you sit for meditation, think of this one (pointing to himself) for a time. I say so because of your faith in this one. A thought on this will link you up to That (God). To illustrate, as soon as you see a herd of cows you think of the cow-herd—the sight of the son reminds one of the father—the sight of an advocate reminds one of the court. It is just like that. Have you got that? The mind is scattered all around. As soon as you think of this one it will become focused on a point. If you think of God with such a mind, the meditation will be truly deep. This is why I advise you so.' At times he said, 'Take firm hold of someone or something that you love most and in the way you cherish most, and then only can there be fixity of purpose. "He is an object of love, how can indifference get hold of Him?" Love is

necessary. He should be called on with some fixed attitude. "Fruition follows on the footsteps of attitudes—conviction is the basic factor. Meditation leads to the ripening of attitudes." Love is wanted, faith is wanted, fixity of purpose is wanted—and then only can come success. What is an attitude? It is the establishment of some relationship with Him (God). The ego that is ever alive to such a relationship—is conscious of it while eating, sleeping, or sitting—one that thinks, for instance, that it is His servant, His son, or His part—is the pure ego, the illumined ego. But the ego which thinks of itself as a Brahmin or a Kâyastha, the son of somebody or the father of someone, is the impure ego. These identifications have to be given up—these only lead to bondage through hardening of egotism and heightening of pride. There should be constant thought and meditation on God, a portion of the mind should for ever be turned towards Him—then only can success follow. One must hold steadfastly to one of the attitudes through which God must be made one's very own, and then only can one insist on one's wishes being fulfilled by Him. To wit, on first acquaintance people use such words as "sir", etc.; as intimacy develops they have recourse to "you", and such words as "sir" are out of place; with the fullest intimacy they turn to "thou", and "you", too, never makes its appearance! He should be made one's very own, yea, more intimate than one's own ego—then only can come success. Take for instance a girl who has just fallen in love with a man. At that time there is a great effort at hiding, an overwhelming trepidation, and insuperable shyness; but as love deepens there is nothing of all that—she takes hold of his hand and publicly leaves home with him. If the man is then indifferent to her comfort and wants to desert her, she holds him fast by his neck and says, "For your sake I left home; tell me now if you will make adequate arrangement for my maintenance!" Similarly one who has renounced everything for God, and has made Him one's own, can be very hard with Him and say, "I have given up everything for Thy sake; say now if Thou wilt vouchsafe me Thy presence!" '

If he noticed any ebb in anyone's love for God he would say, 'How lacking in faith it is to say, "If I do not get Him in this life I shall get Him in the next." One should not have such a timorous love. One should have the strength of faith and firmness of conviction that one will get Him through His grace even in this life; how else can it succeed? In that countryside (meaning the area round his native village) the peasants who want to buy bulls, first touch their tails. There are some bulls that do not make any spirited response to such a touch, but relax their limbs and fall down flat on the ground; so the peasants conclude that these are worthless. But those that being touched on their tails respond by frisks and fidgets are considered to be very useful; so they choose from these latter ones. Effeminacy is no good. Muster strength and say, "I must realize Him, aye, even forthwith." Then only will success come.' Again he added, 'Eliminate gradually these earthly desires, and then you will succeed. But instead of giving them up you go on multiplying them all the more—how can, then, fruition follow?'

If any one, be he a believer in forms or formlessness, felt dejected when he did not find any Divine response to his orison or meditation, the Master said, 'In angling one has first to set a bait. It may so happen that after setting up a bait, one is sitting for long with the rod in hand, while there is no sign of any fish, and one is led to thinking that there is no fish in the pond. Then some day a big fish makes a stir, which makes one conclude that the pond abounds with fish. Then on another day the float moves, and one

thinks that there is a fish near about. Then on a subsequent day the float sinks, and one draws up the hook to find that the fish has gulped the bait and left. One fixes a new bait on the hook, throws it in, and sits with all attention. Then on a subsequent day as soon as a fish gulps the bait, one lands it on the bank with a mighty pull.' To some he said, 'God is very quick of hearing; He hears everything. He has heard all your calls, and will certainly vouchsafe His vision some day or other, at least He will do so at the time of death.' To some he said, 'If you cannot fix on either form or formlessness, then pray thus: "Lord, I cannot understand whether You are with or without form. Howsoever You may be, kindly reveal Yourself to me." ' To rouse others he said, 'Believe me, my child, I say it on my honour that one can really have God-vision. He can be seen and talked to just as intimately as we two are now gossiping together.'

There is a further point to note. Generally speaking, any continuance at the threshold of the super-conscious for all the twenty-four hours of the day means a deepening of contemplativeness which is adverse to the performance of ordinary duties of life and which is uncongenial to the remembrance of petty affairs of this world. Instances of this abound galore not only in the religious world, they are also met with in the lives of geniuses in the scientific, political, and other fields. It is noticed, for instance, that they are quite inept in taking care of their own persons, arranging things in their proper places, and such other petty details. It was no small wonder, however, that in the Master's life, we noticed that in spite of such deep meditativeness he was fully conscious of these details; when he was not, as in *samadhi*, he had neither the consciousness of his own body or any thing or person of this world; but when he was, he was conscious of everything. We shall cite here only a few illustrations of this.

One morning the Master was going to Balaram's house from Dakshineswar with his nephew Ramlal and Swami Yogananda. When all were in the carriage and it had proceeded up to the gate of the garden, the Master asked Swami Yogananda, 'Have you brought my cloth and towel for bathing?'

Yogananda: 'No, sir, I have brought the towel only, but forgotten the cloth. But what of that; the people there will find out some unused cloth for you.'

Master: 'How unthinkingly you talk! They will think, "How boorish he is!" They will be worried and put to difficulties. Stop the carriage and fetch the cloth.' So Swami Yogananda had to act accordingly.

The Master would say, 'When a cultured and lucky man comes to a house, everything works in order, nobody feels troubled. But should a boorish wretch come, everything is at sixes and sevens. It so happens that he comes on the very day when the house has run short of everything and the master of the house is likely to be put to difficulties on his account.'

During the Master's time, a gentleman named Pratap Hazra led for long a religious life at Dakshineswar. We used to call him Hazra Mahâshaya, and he often accompanied the Master when the latter visited his disciples in Calcutta. Once, when returning from such a visit, Hazra left his towel in Calcutta by mistake. When, on his return to Dakshineswar, the Master heard of this, he told him, 'Enraptured as I am by God's name I can hardly take care of my loin-cloth, yet I never leave behind my towel or wallet in Calcutta through mistake, whereas you have become so forgetful as a result of repeating God's name a little!'

The Master instructed the Holy Mother (Shri Sâradâmani Devi) thus: 'When travelling by train or boat, board it first; but when getting down, be the last to leave it after being sure that nothing is left behind through mistake.' So mindful was he of petty things!

Jewish communities, welcomed the American statement and declared that there can be no permanent peace without religious foundation.

Christians and Jews will share the responsibility of putting the plans and actions of statesmen to the tests of religion, the Council declared.—*Reuter.*

That was very heartening indeed. The organized religions of Europe seem to be taking a firmer stand on spiritual unity, though the actual declaration is very vague. Compared with this the article in the *Unity* is more illuminating because it deals with more concrete materials. Before real peace can come, organized religion must recognize that though spirituality works for peace communalism pulls its weight the other way.

Missionary Methods among Aboriginals

The missionaries have an efficient technique for getting the simple and gullible aboriginals into their power. They swear that they have no intention of making converts. Yet in a few months they have the villages saying 'Jai Jesu' instead of 'Jai Ram' and they refuse to speak to anyone who does not repeat this password. They are now employing many Hindu teachers. These are called for their pay on a Saturday so that they will be able to attend Church the following day; one of them has described to me how when he—a Hindu—arrived at the mission station to draw his pay, he was compelled to fall on his knees, cross himself, and exclaim 'Jai Jesu'. The missionaries take thumb impressions from the people, and then threaten to prosecute them if they withdraw their support from the Church. . . . A missionary propagandist even threatened one of my workers that the Father would bring his gun and shoot him if he dared to oppose the Christians. The Fathers, finally, have an extensive money-lending business, and this is one of their most effective means of bringing their aboriginals under their control and forcing them into the Church.

Thus writes Verrier Elwin in the *Indian Social Reformer.* Varied are the methods employed by Christian missionaries in our country to obtain converts in large numbers. The above observations from a well-known worker among aboriginals, who himself was a missionary formerly and later renounced, are significant.

In Father Elwin's opinion the policy of the Government has indirectly helped the missionaries in their proselytizing activity:

The establishment of the Partially Excluded Areas by the Government of India Act, a measure that deeply offended every shade of Indian sentiment, aimed at giving some kind of protection to the religion and culture of the aboriginals. All that in practice it appears to have achieved has been to give encouragement to proselytizing missions that have not hesitated to exploit to the full the opportunity of occupying areas so remote from the scrutiny of public opinion. In the Santal Parganas, for example, thousands of Santals have been converted to Christianity and quite recently, since the passing of the Act (*Hindusthan Times,* 15 June 1944).

Proselytizing has thus been helped by politics, though politicians are loud in their protestation of religious neutrality. The Indian spiritual atmosphere cannot be cleansed unless politics is freed from communalism.

East and West

The last Great War, and more so the present War, have revealed the hollowness of Western civilization. But Westerners are proud of their 'progressive civilization', and look upon Eastern culture as visionary, unrealistic, and other-worldly. The West has advanced a long way in scientific adventure and commercial prosperity, while the East is content to live undisturbed in comparative security and piety. But where do real happiness and progress lie? Pearl Buck, addressing the students at Antioch College, said,

Only the people of the East can frame a real and durable organisation for world peace, because only they really comprehend the laws of human nature.

She asserted that when the West is able to receive the wisdom of the East, then it will result in the 'greatest renaissance the world has ever seen'.

European civilization, according to some of its accredited exponents, aims at exterminating non-Europeans with the sword in order to gain 'living space' for Europeans. Scientific advancement utilized to achieve might over right and

victory over the weaker nations does not conduce to human progress as a whole. The Easterners discovered long ago that the cultivation of spirituality alone brings true enjoyment here and hereafter.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE CONGRESS CASE. By Jag Parvesh Chander. *Published by Free India Publications, the Mall, Lahore. Pp. 121. Price Rs. 3.*

The author writes in the Introduction: 'As a student of Indian politics I have taken upon myself to present "The Congress Case". Officially I hold no brief for the great patriotic organization. Hence the book is an unprejudiced account of the last four critical years in Indian national life. It is unaffected by party politics, and every aspect of the situation is weighed in the historian's balance and adjudged from the view-point which every freedom-loving individual has.' Indian nationalism has had a chequered career in the last half a century. With the onset of the present war India has had to share a great portion of the responsibility for war effort in several directions. The country is passing through a period of great travail, ravaged by famine and pestilence on an unprecedented scale. Everybody is anxious to do something to save the country from a worse catastrophe which may befall her if the present state of things is allowed to continue. Even before taking up plans for post-war reconstruction, the Government and the leaders of the people have to come together and chalk out a bold and cautious procedure by which the resources of the country can be conserved and millions can be saved from destitution. But some of the leaders are in prison, and a general feeling of frustration and helplessness is in evidence everywhere.

In the book under review, the author makes a close study of the political events in India since the outbreak of the war with special reference to the Indian National Congress. He presents the view that the Congress leaders are one with the United Nations in their opposition to aggression and enslavement of one nation by another in any form whatsoever. He argues that the Congress was never in sympathy with undemocratic forces, but that the leaders have been misunderstood and misrepresented in many quarters. Relevant passages from speeches of Congress leaders and Government spokesmen, and important extracts from the resolutions of the Congress are incorporated to support the writer's arguments. It is a timely publication distinguished by sound reasoning and clarity of expression. Mr. K. M. Munshi has written an appreciative foreword to the book.

ARCHÆOLOGY AND ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY. By Jnanaratna Dr. Hirananda Shastri, M.A., M.O.L., D.Litt. *Published by the Gujarata Vernacular Society, Ahmedabad. Pp. 107+24. Price Rs. 3.*

This book consists of four lectures delivered before the Gujarata Vernacular Society by the eminent scholar who has served in the Archæological Department of the Government of India and has lately been Director of Archæology, Baroda State. In the first lecture an attempt is made to show by suitable examples how Archæology is helping to reconstruct the ancient history of India and thus raising the Indian people in the estimation of the world. It is regrettable that this valuable service of Archæology is not adequately recognized by the Central, Provincial, and State Governments. The second lecture deals with the monuments of Gujarata and Kathiawad. The third deals with Nalanda, and the fourth recounts the main sources of the cultural history of Gujarata and Kathiawad.

The lectures are free from technicalities and are meant for the lay public. A number of plates added at the end have heightened the value of the book. There is also an exhaustive index. Readers who cannot go in for bigger volumes will do well to turn to this handy book, though its price is rather high.

KASTURBAI GANDHI. By Miss Dhan Wanti Chandra. *Published by the Free India Publications, The Mall, Lahore. Pp. 44. Price 12 As.*

We congratulate Miss Dhanwanti Chandra, the young apprentice in the profession of journalism, on her writing this little brochure on the life of Kasturbai Gandhi who lived for a high ideal and who gave her life for the cause of India within the prison walls. We wish Miss Chandra all success in her endeavour to adopt journalism as a career.

BEGGAR MY NEIGHBOUR. (The Case for India). By Lionel Fielden. *Published by International Book House Ltd., Bombay. Pp. 99. Price Rs. 3.*

As the sub-title shows, it is a case for

India. It is, in fact, the strongest case any Englishman has recently presented.

The author was for some time Director of Broadcasting to the Government of India. In that capacity, and later as a private individual, he has studied the Indian question as closely as possible. Also, he has tried to understand the official as well as the non-official view-point. He is convinced England has no excuse for delaying India's freedom. All talk of responsibilities to the minorities and such other things equivalent to the 'white man's burden' he dismisses as nonsense. At the same time, he proves hollow the bogey that Congress is pro-Japanese. He argues it is in England's interest that India should have freedom at once. And, he warns, if, on the contrary, freedom is denied to her now on one or other pretext, the consequences will be fatal to the future relations between England and India.

He suggests a new approach to the Indian question —an approach in terms of feelings and emotions. He believes too much reliance on factual evidence is a mistake. Account must be taken of human feelings and emotions too. At least in deciding the question of a country's freedom they must have priority to bare cold facts.

Then, the author says, India is not a concern of England only. She is a concern of the other members of the United Nations too. The first step towards the establishment of a lasting peace in the world is India's freedom. In this other members of the United Nations have a duty as well as a responsibility.

In presenting India's case the author makes the strongest indictment of the civilization of the West. Himself a product of it, he thinks it is an utter failure. He is no believer in industrialism. He believes the insane craze for more and more of everything has been the undoing of the West. For this has led to imperialism, and imperialism has led to war. It is almost a vicious circle, and in it the West is struggling.

He pleads for a new spirit, a new outlook. He is impressed by Gandhiji's philosophy of life. He believes there is much in it that the West will do well to accept. He is convinced, unless the West adopts a new scale of values; unless it revises the whole basis of its life, it is doomed.

The author gives a true and clear picture of India. His analysis is objective and well-reasoned. Throughout, he shows great sympathy, great understanding. And happily, there is none of that patronizing air about him which, in the case of most foreigners, vitiates what is otherwise well-meaning and sympathetic.

We consider it a remarkable book. We commend it to all those who care for a free India and a happier world.

SANSKRIT--ENGLISH PRASTHANIK-TRAYI OF THE THREE-FOLD VEDANTA. By R. C. Vidyarthi. *Gita Bhawan, Agra. Price not mentioned.*

This is apparently the first volume or Shruti Prasthana of the intended series of works on Vedanta. It contains the twelve principal Upanishads with texts, English translation, and occasional notes, besides an introduction and an appendix.

In the introduction the main themes of Vedanta have been stated very briefly. The English translation mainly follows the verbal interpretation of the texts and as such it cannot be expected always to convey the right sense; the volume will, however, be appreciated as a handy book of Upanishadic reference. The appendix contains extracts from the *Râmâyana*, the *Yoga-vâshishtha*, Tulsidas, etc., and should have formed a separate volume.

Isanchandra Ray

NEWS AND REPORTS

REPORTS PUBLISHED

The following branches of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission have published their reports for the periods noted against each:

The Twelfth General Report of the Ramakrishna Mission ...	1942-43
Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Calcutta	1943
Ramakrishna Mission Industrial School and Home, Belur ...	1941-43
Ramakrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary, Belur	1942-43
Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar	1943
Ramakrishna Mission (Mauritius Branch), Port Louis	1943

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION NEW BOYS' HOME

With the donation of the proprietors of the 'Basumati, who have placed at the disposal of the Ramakrishna Mission about Rupees three lakhs and a half together with landed properties including buildings near Khardah 12 miles from Calcutta, in accordance with the will of the late Babu Satish Chandra Mukherjee, the Mission is going to start a decent orphanage for boys. This noble act of charity is sure to inspire others.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX | OCTOBER, 1944 | No. 10



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

THE SERVICE OF GOD IN MEN

By Swami Turiyananda

I

I have been greatly pained to read of the pitiable plight of Bankura. —'s letter gives a heart-rending description of it. At the time when you should be blessed by serving the afflicted to the best of your abilities you have given evidence of a perverse attitude. It has astonished and greatly pained me to read of it. You have asked me to bless you so that you may be free from this work. But what other work are you going to do after being free from it? Service of God? Have you forgotten, 'He who loves man loves God'? Swamiji chalked out such an easy means for your liberation. Have you forgotten so quickly? 'Before thee are His various forms; forsaking these where thou seekest for God?' 'No man attains to actionlessness by refraining from work.' How will you be free from work without doing work? Don't let yourself succumb to *tamas* by taking up this perverse attitude by giving rein to laziness. On the contrary be blessed by doing work—why work—worship, for service of man is not work but real worship of God. Know it for certain, such opportunities do not come always.

II

The Lord's will alone is fulfilled. What more is there to be said about it? I am glad to know that you are keeping well and devoting your mind more to the service of God in man. 'There is no fear of turning out to be a Jada Bharata by looking upon man as God.' This was what the Master hinted to Swamiji when the latter rebuked him for entertaining so much affection for them by pointing out the example of Jada Bharata. So I find no reason of your being afraid of love and affection. You are worshipping the Lord. Academic jargon, etc., are mere outer vesture to you. For you very well know that it 'never, never saves'. 'The doer of good, my son, never comes to grief.' (Gita, VI. 40). These are the words of the Lord. So where is the likelihood of your developing a wrong attitude?

IDOLS AND INSPIRATION

By the Editor

I

Men, particularly modern men, want to be their own guides. They are loth to render allegiance to any person or institution, though they are peculiarly prone to cants, slogans, and shibboleths borrowed mostly at second hand and having no real touch with life. When they follow a leader they are loud in their protestation that they adhere not to him as a person but to the ideology he represents. This augurs well inasmuch as modern men seem to have transcended the physical and vital planes and reached a higher intellectual level: they are proportionately less concerned with food and shelter—the problems in the bodily plane having been solved more satisfactorily than before; they are not now mere creatures of impulses, but can guide themselves by the light of intellect and morality. This is indeed a rosy picture, flattering to man as he stands at this juncture.

But look at the other side of the shield. The tall talk of the fortunate few is made possible by relative poverty and degradation of the many. The spectre of poverty, ignorance, and moral depravity still stalks the world. Imperialism still thrives at the cost of the exploited, and democracy at home is rendered successful by exploitation in the colonies. When leading nations and leaders of society talk big, the poor people look askance or insulted. Furthermore, sooner or later, the leaders betray their own inner vulgarity and poverty of spirit when they fly at each other's throats to claim for themselves a greater share of the earth's good things.

The disease is easily diagnosed. The greatest progress achieved by humanity has not, at its best, transcended the intellectual and moral planes. There is, as yet, no higher principle at work, no higher inspiration streaming down to the social level to make it more free, more equitable, more harmonious, more cohesive and more spontaneous. Intellect works from the bottom up unless it is vouchsafed an afflatus from above. Its usual course is to build systems with fragmentary things, to systematize and synthesize unrelated details and dogmas, to build robots and engines into which it cannot breathe life. Democracy, for instance, for which the present war is being fought, is one such ideology arrived at by the intellect through a process of synthesis and analysis. By experience and experiment some societies have hit upon it, and that has come to stay as a source of inspiration for that society. At first intellect developed it as a method of social welfare; but just as some poets are captivated by their own imageries, taking them for real things, so also the social intelligence now no longer takes democracy as a method of procedure but as an idol to swear by, irrespective of its real worth and capacity to inspire humanity as a whole. But can robots inspire or engines lead? Failures of the so-called democracy are, therefore, palpably clear to those who refuse to be swayed by shibboleths. In criticizing democracy René Guénon writes in his *Crisis of the Modern World*:

> If the word democracy is defined as the government of the people by themselves, it expresses an absolute impossibility and cannot even have a *de facto* existence, in our time any more than in any other, . . . it is contradictory to say that the same persons can be at the same time rulers and ruled . . . . the law is supposed to be made by the opinion of the majority, but what is overlooked is that this opinion is something that can very easily be guided and modified; it is always possible, by means of suitable suggestions, to arouse in it currents moving in this or that direction as

desired . . . . It is simply the law of matter and brute force, the same law, by which a mass, carried down by its weight, crushes everything that lies in its track (pp. 109-10).

The less said about tyrannies, dictatorships, and other political institutions, the better.

The tyrants like to herd their subjects into those vast crowds, in which the individual is reduced to an intoxicated sub-humanity (Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means*, p. 81).

Nor is the nation a very noble or elevating leader of life and thought;

The nation is a strange deity. It imposes difficult duties and demands the greatest sacrifice, and because it does this and because human beings have a hunger and thirst after righteousness, it is loved. But it is also loved because it panders to the lowest elements in human nature and because men and women like to have excuses to feel pride and hatred, because they long to taste even at second hand the joys of criminality (*ibid.*, p. 111). . . . The ethics of international politics are precisely those of the gangster, the pirate, the swindler, the bad bold baron (*ibid.*, p. 110).

II

We have purposely dealt with politics first since it is considered to be the most powerful source of inspiration or, as some would prefer to say, intoxication, for social uplift. We dislike condemning it outright, for it has its rightful place and undeniable efficacy as a lever for social advancement. Our grievance is that these instruments for human welfare are mistaken as the sources of all good. Idols are mistaken for gods. That is putting the cart before the horse.

With this clear statement of our standpoint let us look at some of the other tinsel gods that are set up by different groups of people—at money, art, poetry, science, etc., for instance. One would think that the old adage, 'Man does not live by bread alone,' had demolished once for all the claim of money to be regarded as a prime consideration of life. But the modern socialistic theories have given it a false respectability which can hardly hide the boorishness under its thin veneer of sophistical paraphernalia. True, socialism has done yeoman's service in tearing asunder the rich garments that hid the poor souls of the upper ten thousand and the cobwebs that hid the gems in the lower strata of society. But apart from this it cannot claim to be a perfect philosophy of life. Facts cry out too loudly against such a presumption. Money is at most a vehicle of ideas, and not the ideas themselves, much less is it the inspiration that informs those ideas. The same criticism can be levelled against aristocracy, oligarchy, and plutocracy, etc., that place earthly considerations above God.

We now turn to science. Science had the greatest awe and respect from humanity two generations ago. The first World War gave the first shock to that stupid allegiance, and the second World War has all but dethroned that impostor. Science, too, is found to be a useful instrument so long as it is kept under proper control and serves higher ends. The old dacoits used to worship Kâli for success in plundering. When the ends themselves are bad science cannot lead us higher: modern science foments only world wars. As Aldous Huxley puts it:

We are living now, not in the delicious intoxication induced by the early successes of science, but in a rather grisly morning-after, when it has become apparent that what triumphant science has done hitherto is to improve the means of achieving unimproved or actually deteriorated ends (*Ends and Means*, p. 309).

Art and poetry fare no better from this critical point of view. At their worst they pander to the grosser instincts of men and at their best they make furtive attempts to clothe in colour and words ideas that baffle expression. In between these two extremes, the so-called poetic inspiration is nothing more than a glow of imagination that can hardly transcend the limitations of the senses. Poetry to be truly inspiring must have a Divine message and must speak to hearts that are eager for something more than a surfeit of breath-taking images. It is this transcendental element that makes Eastern art and literature

ennobling and immortal. In Eastern art the deep calls to the deep. It is mystic rather than realistic. As Lawrence Binyon says:

In this theory every work of art is thought of as an incarnation of the genius of rhythm manifesting the living spirit of things with a clearer beauty and intenser power than the gross impediments of complex matter allow to be transmitted to our senses in the visible world around us. . . . A picture is conceived as a sort of apparition from a more real world of essential life.

Even so, art is a vehicle and not the source of inspiration itself. And as already hinted, appreciation of divine values requires some preparation on the part of the connoisseurs. A thing of beauty is of course a joy for ever. But the joy has its degrees of temporary appeal and permanent transformation according to the mood we are in and the reality we are in touch with through art.

III

On the whole, then, it would seem that we must aim at a more direct touch with the true source of inspiration whose partial manifestations are vouchsafed through the different mediums and instruments. Apart from this transcendental reference, slogans, vocations, and institutions are lifeless idols. Man cannot and should not remain for ever satisfied with such indirect contact with that source of life, light, beauty, and bliss. To make this direct inspiration possible the first step needed is to lift our thoughts upward. Our discursive intellect must now lay itself at the service of rhythm, harmony, dedication, and liberty. But weak humanity cannot achieve much merely through personal effort. Nor does a pooling of resources help much. For spirituality is an integral evolution from within and not a synthetic growth from without. When the real hankering comes, the covering of nescience gets eliminated layer by layer. Or as some would say, spiritual evolution begins with the descent of the Spirit in the heart of the aspirant. Congregational prayer may help; good wishes of friends and the company of the good people may elevate; and self-effort may give the initial momentum. But at some stage or other one must surrender oneself to the higher will. Self-willed progress in spiritual life is a contradiction in terms. In their search for this higher will on the human plane the ancients came across the Gurus or spiritual leaders, selfless people absorbed in higher values.

The highest Guru is an *avatâra*, incarnation, through whom the light of spirituality shines the most brilliant. A mere look or touch of him can make a man whole. The scriptures of almost all religions bear testimony to the inspiration derived from such incarnations. It is to be noted, however, that an *avatâra* is just on the borderland of ends and means. In a sense he is a transmitter of spirituality; and yet he is spirituality itself, as, being identified with the Deity, he has no life apart from spirituality.

Nevertheless, one cannot get an *avatâra* for the mere asking. God in His mercy knows best when to manifest Himself. In the absence of incarnations, men have perforce to rely on Gurus, the illumined souls who after God-realization place themselves, through compassion, at the disposal of God for the service of humanity. Modern society is intolerant of any homage rendered to any human being, because it has no clear conception of what the institution of Guru means.

The Gurus are the spiritual media through whom this world is linked to a higher source of inspiration which imparts life, light, and meaning to all lower planes; for the higher cannot come out of the lower. A Guru symbolizes higher spiritual values which no democratic pooling of resources can replace.

. . . The higher cannot emanate from the lower, because the greater cannot come out of the less. . . . It is abundantly clear that the people cannot confer a power that they do not themselves possess ; true power can only come from above, and it can be legitimized only by the sanction of some-

thing which stands above the social order, that is to say, by a spiritual authority (*The Crisis of the Modern World*).

A Guru stands for tradition, and recent developments have clearly demonstrated that a society can neither completely root out its traditions nor can it live well by suddenly breaking away from the past. A Guru personifies the ideal future, without a dream and vision of which society cannot prosper, for the present is quite meaningless when studied in isolation from the total life of the Spirit. Otherworldliness is not always an evil; but in a truer sense it is a blessing :

> To be able to give oneself wholeheartedly to the present, one must be persistently aware that it is *not all*. One must rather be able to treat the present moment as if it were engaged in the business allotted to it by the total life which stretches indefinitely beyond (Hocking: *Thoughts on Death and Life*).

A Guru is a centre of love, faith, respect, and other qualities of the heart which bind together the different individuals and the successive generations and ensure the smooth working of the social machinery.

But Gurus and *avatâras*, too, may turn into idols unless the Ultimate Reality which they stand for is always kept in view. This presupposes an adequate preparation on the part of society. For unless the social level is high, men cannot get a real glimpse of Reality, or even if they get it now and then, they cannot hold to It for ever or give It free play in all their avocations of life.

IV

With the recognition of the *avatâras* and the Gurus as the true media of inspiration and spirituality as the basis of a good society, our next task is to look for some institutions and their essential characteristics that can encourage and perpetuate a Godward trend in all our dealings. The ancient scriptures are never tired of insisting on natural growth based on *svabhâva*, one's own nature, to which we may add one's natural environment. The Ultimate Reality is caught in the social prism in different ways, and the colour that is most real to anyone is naturally also the most appealing and encouraging. Though one need not deny the possibility of other colours, one has to start with the one that is most truly real for the time being, for the denial of this latter means the denial of one's power of vision and comprehension. In the social and political fields, then, no group or race can progress by totally ignoring the culture that it possesses. A simple boy told us the other day, 'Truth to say, sir, I cannot understand why the communists should replace the national flag by the red flag. Can't communism, if it is a good thing, be taught under the national flag which is also a good thing and which we readily bow to? What do we, after all, know about Russia and its shibboleths: these have no real touch with life. And what's the fun there, sir, in canvassing for little school girls? Can't they convince older people or even college boys?' Could we give any adequate answer? We only thought, when idols get the better of life and light, you cannot expect better things.

But there was a deeper significance in the boy's complaint. India, following such distorted presentation of Western culture, is out to achieve national greatness at the expense of the younger generation. The older people are too afraid of facing facts and making adequate sacrifices. They want to enjoy life. So leadership has gone to impulsive youths. The older people now grumble and complain. But this is useless, since they cannot present their own ideals to the younger generation as anything more than mere idols. And when idols are at conflict, the younger people run after those of the successful West rather than those of the dead East. And yet, the ancient texts prescribed to their graduates: 'Consider your mothers as goddesses, your fathers as gods, and your Gurus as gods.' The fact is, when gods lack divinity how

can they divinize others? The family life, then, has to be put on a better footing, a footing of divine consecration through which the different units will get more closely knit together. It will not do, for instance, to run after bad Western pictures and expect the children to be moral. Unless divinity can become an all-absorbing interest in family life, it cannot replace the Western idols. Sincerity in life and action at home can alone counteract the insincerity in speech and propaganda in wider fields.

Besides, forms and institutions logically evolved and intellectually adhered to do not touch the whole personality: the response to them, therefore, is only partial. In order that social forms may be truly inspiring, love must grease its wheels at every turn. And family is the best natural field for training in this self-sacrificing love which no ideology and institution can substitute. In order that a social unit may make intelligent, willing, and loving contribution to the whole, he must first grasp it as a whole and learn by stages to serve it with his whole being. And this can be most effectively developed through a devout family.

This resuscitation of family life presupposes a deeper acquaintance with our ancient culture embedded in the Vedas and Upanishads, the Purânas and Tantras. Sanskrit holds the key to our national revival and survival, for in it is held the life-giving elixir of the Hindu nation. People will be smiling at this suggestion, we fear. For in their estimation we are talking of a dead past which should be allowed to bury its dead. And yet, truth to say, renaissance in Europe was brought by the discovery of an old-world literature, for it gave a truer picture of the real Europe than it thought itself to be. In India, too, with the advent of *avatâras*, who represented the old Sanskrit culture, society grew into huge stature almost overnight. This happened with the coming of Râma, Krishna, Buddha, Shankara, Ramanuja, Chaitanya, and others. For once a man can know his true stature, nothing can bind him down to his present degrading environment. Besides, Sanskrit is not as dead as it is thought to be. It records the achievements of a living society of which the present one is a mere distortion. The old should not be read solely in the light of the present. To place the present society on surer foundations we must get acquainted with the principles that it was designed to embody. Let us not think that the present form of our society is the best and has the blessings of our forbears, for that is another idolatry. Let us face facts with open minds, let us explore our old traditions out of which life has almost been stifled by seven hundred years of foreign rule leaving us only with the unrelated outlines.

To conclude: Indian society believed in integral development and not in lopsided growth. At every stage of life, therefore, the growing mind was placed amidst integral wholes like family, village, town, country, etc., through which it could get a rapidly developing view of the Cosmic Reality behind all, till in a life of renunciation or a complete identification with Wholeness Itself the individual found his life's mission fulfilled.

India at this juncture expects great things from her children; she expects them to repay their spiritual debts to their gods who have made their lives on earth possible, to the old seers who have given them an unparalleled culture, and to society which has provided them with protection and means of growth. Above all, Hinduism expects all Hindus to be true to their *svadharma* and not run after false idols. In order that Hinduism may come to its own, it requires to be reunited with its God through its natural spiritual leaders, and it has to be broad-based on a purer family and social life sustained by a hoary culture that has survived the stress and strain of ages and proved its intrinsic worth.

PLANNING: FROM PAPER TO RESULTS*

By Major Albert Mayer, C.E.

Before going into the subject of tonight's lecture, I would like to say something about lectures and audiences generally. I am not a professional lecturer, and I believe the only thing that justifies a lecture or a series of lectures, is if those listening to it are affected to the point of doing something about it. In the same way, no matter how good a poem may be, or a work of art, or a play in the theatre, if it is merely entertainment and if you merely enjoy it passively, if it does not impress you enough so that you are inspired to do something about it, then it has missed its mark. As to lectures, if no strong, permanent, effective impulse is generated, the lecturer and the audience have both wasted their time. I hope there will be people and groups who will do something about the subject of tonight's talk.

Another general point I want to make is this. In the relatively short time I have been here, especially short because in the Army we are naturally here to win a war, and not as observers of general conditions, I have not learnt as much about India as I would like. However, in spite of this handicap, I will take the liberty of making recommendations that I feel are essential anywhere, and of emphasizing those points in which I think American experience may be helpful to you. Certainly the principal or only value of what I have to say lies in my trying to show you where gaps exist in your situation and how they may be filled.

Planning is a very broad term. While it has been recognized and emphasized by name only in the last few years until now it may be called a slogan, we have always practised it to a greater or less extent. Everyone has some rough plan for his own life, whether he can carry it out completely or not. Every business or industry plans its production as far ahead as it can see, and always has. Every party standing for election has its platform, which is nothing but a plan for what it hopes to be able to accomplish within the years that it holds power. Every railroad has a time-table which it lives up to as nearly as it can, and that time-table is nothing but a plan based on its rail capacity, the number of wagons and locomotives available and their speed, on the number of passengers, and on the amount and kind of goods that it expects. So planning is nothing new or fancy. It should not be theoretical only, but intensely practical.

As I see it, the only new elements in planning are two : first we should plan in terms of the people and their needs rather than in more restricted private terms ; and second that we believe planning should cover fields which up to now have been neglected. Another point about planning is that it must not be rigid or too restricting. It should be flexible and easy to change within the limits of its main purposes, so that it can meet new conditions and new demands. This applies to all planning, whether the broadest social and economic planning, or town and village and community planning. I may say here that all these levels of planning are most effective when they are interrelated as in The Tennessee Valley Authority in my country. This has been our most successful example of planning that has actually been executed. The Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers and a great area around them, which had been poor land for agriculture, subject to frequent floods, were placed under one planning authority to accomplish control of the floods,

* Lecture delivered at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta.

to improve navigation, generate electric power, and provide irrigation for the land. In order to do this much they had to do a good deal more. Not only did they build dams and power-houses, but they planted forests to hold the rain water, they planned and built new towns and villages at important points, they used the dammed-up lakes and the forests as the basis for a fine recreation area, they located new industries in planned relation to the other elements.

But while this larger planning cannot be carried out except as it is physically expressed in dams and farms and factories and communities and villages, individual communities *can* be planned and can be *built* even if the larger planning cannot be consummated. In the U.S.A. we have been able to accomplish only one such Tennessee Valley Authority so far. It is the intimate local planning and consummation by building that I want to discuss tonight. At this level, planning is not remote and intangible, but intimately concerns every man, woman, and child in ways that they recognize in their daily lives, in their homes, in their schools, in their villages. And though this planning takes great technical skill, it is planning in which every citizen can and should participate, because it is only in terms of the habits and desires of ordinary people that this work can be successful. The organization of this work must be guided by competent technical people, who also must have the courage of the future, and not be bound too much by habit and statistic, but he in turn must be guided in human values by the consumers of his plan, of his housing, of his buildings.

I have used the words community and planned community a good deal. What is a community—particularly a good, planned community? It may be a village, or it may be a section of a city. It should consist of homes with playgrounds and parks, with shops and school, and, if possible, a cultural centre, all near enough at hand so that most of people's daily lives are passed and most of their interests are centred in the community. For safety, no important automobile traffic street should cut through it, but should pass on the outside of it—that is, there are local streets for pedestrian traffic and local traffic within it, which is slow-moving. Fast, dangerous traffic should pass outside. Thus if you built a new village on a busy highway such as the Grand Trunk Road or on a highway likely to become heavily travelled with through traffic, you would not have half the village on one side and half on the other as you do now, but the entire village would be a little off the highway, though convenient to it. In Calcutta if you were building a new community, or re-building an old one, you would observe the same principles by avoiding present main traffic arteries, and consult the Calcutta Improvement Trust's maps showing location of future arteries.

Within such a community you would avoid the present usual helter-skelter of shops and offices and homes, by placing your shops and offices in one or two concentrated locations instead of scattering them. In this way you can do your shopping more quickly and conveniently, and at the same time people in their homes are not bothered by the activities and noises of the shops, nor by the refuse and even smells that are part of the activities of shops such as eating places, fruit or butcher shops, blacksmith shops, etc.

In short, when you build a good community, you build to assure health, convenience, safety ; you conserve energy and minimize the usual daily irritation and lost motion of ordinary living. Such communities or groups are not more costly than the same number of houses and shops and offices built separately and in haphazard fashion ; in fact they generally cost less, because there are economies in large-scale design and construction as compared with piecemeal work.

The interest and opportunity in this kind of planning of homes, farms and meeting places of the people, lie in the fact that any community can start such a project, and in many cases build it in individual places, even if the great national plans take longer. While in many cases help may be required from beyond, such as the provincial Government, that help is in manageable terms and it may be available ; there will be other cases where local resources or local philanthropic wealth can be mobilized adequately without help from beyond. Calcutta could evolve and carry out a plan even if Bombay did not, or *vice versa.* In fact a large enough neighbourhood cell in Calcutta properly located could become a planned community which would be an example for Calcutta even if Calcutta had not made its own complete plan; and the proved advantages of such a planned community would have a profound effect in inducing the whole city to plan. Calcutta is a good illustration, because here you can see the results of some partial planning, but mainly no planning. You have a terrible mix-up of shops and industries and homes and narrow crooked streets, but you have the wonderful *maidan*, an early example of accidental planning; more recently the Calcutta Improvement Trust has created Dhakuria Lake and a number of neighbourhood parks and playgrounds. Within the framework of the Trust's announced plans for roads, etc., you can plan good new communities instead of just a lot of single unrelated houses and shops.

This is the main point I would stress, particularly in India. Here the tendency is to hold your breath, to postpone individual local performance until your great national issues are all settled. Granted that such national settlements must deeply affect the outlook of everyone, there are many reasons why work at the community level is immediately important. In the first place, it can go on at once, and it can be ready for actual building as soon as War's end makes materials and men available. This is a tremendous and unique advantage. Like every other country, you will face some unemployment at the end of the War. If such projects are ready, they can quickly absorb large numbers of people, not only in actual construction but also in brickyards, in cement plants, in factories. Experience in my country is that, when people are out of work and there is a frantic effort to put them to work, it is first come, first done. The communities that have projects all ready to go forward are welcomed, and their work is pushed ahead.

In the second place, housing and planning are as vital and urgent as any problems that face you. They do not consist merely of monuments and broad boulevards and opera houses as the old planning did. Modern planning means better homes, safer streets; it means spending less time in travel to work; it means parks and playgrounds, which all adds up to better health. I had a talk recently with the Chairman of the Calcutta Improvement Trust, asked him how it happened to be established as far back as 1911. He said that the chief effective reason was the health of the city, to prevent plagues. Certainly their parks and playgrounds and green open spaces make a great difference to people's health and happiness. Of course many other elements enter into health, but these are among the most important. No doubt there should be more; possibly low-cost housing should be built by the Trust itself for *bustee* people, and the location of commerce and of industries should be controlled. But there is where public opinion comes in, to encourage and back up and extend the first-rate work the Trust has done, as far as it goes.

Again, the participation required of every element in the community to achieve good planning will be a splendid adventure in education and co-operation. You need the architect and engineer as chief planners. The busi-

ness men are important in connection with location and type of shopping places and office buildings. The economist has a role to play in studying the probable incomes of the people and relating them to rents they can afford, in determining the expenses of such communities and the taxes they can pay. The agriculturist in a particular locality can contribute by indicating how closely or remotely town and rural life can be integrated, and what the economies are of the close inter-relationship of the two, in the type of community we in the Western world call the Garden City, by the reduction of transportation costs, the saving in such items as refrigerated wagons, etc. The educator must be consulted as to types and location of schools, the possible use of the school at night for adult education and community and club activities, and by such double use of buildings make great cost economies. And the ordinary people can participate—for instance the housewife should make herself heard as to the details of the homes to be built, the kind of shopping facilities that are easiest and most convenient.

The fruitful contact at the intimate level of planning is also important because planning will become actuality only if public opinion grows along with it and demands it. Many beautiful plans have never been built because it was all a conception, not an expression of the people. Other beautiful plans have been built, but only for the benefit of a few because the public did not insist on being considered. The magnificent boulevards in Paris are only one or two blocks away from the slums.

And, finally, the benefit of such local single plans is that they develop the technicians and the technical skill, the actual experience which you now lack, and which you must have if good communities are eventually to become the rule rather than the exception. Your technicians must not only be skilful planners, they must be organizers, they must be able to plan not only in terms of construction, but in terms of economics. They must be able to tell you whether it is just the middle and upper classes who can live in such communities, or whether they can provide for poorer people also, what for example the maximum interest rate is that can be paid for capital used, and still house people of modest income; or whether city or State aid is needed, and how much.

Believe me that such technicians are not developed over-night. I would not have you conclude from these descriptions that a breed of Supermen is required to carry out such work. On the contrary, it simply requires men who have training in this field, a good deal of common sense and determination, and above all experience and knowledge of how to get things done. You do not need magicians. You need people working in an atmosphere where action is not neglected in favour of talk.

I have said that such local individual plans could come to pass without waiting for complete national results, and in some cases even before provincial Governments went into action. I want to give you some actual instances of this. In the U.S.A. decent housing for the poor is still by no means the rule. In fact, the Government in Washington took its first action in 1934 to supply funds, the main purpose being less to create good housing than to create work for the unemployed during the depression. Later on, more funds were supplied by the national Government. Later still, due to political changes, the further money required for more housing was voted down. National public opinion in favour of housing was not strong enough. But in some localities it did have enough strength. New York State—a State with us corresponds to your provincial Government—did supply funds, and so did the city, which now has money for low-cost housing both from its own individual resources and from the State Government.

I have just said to you that the first

Government move in our country for housing the poor was in 1934. But private effort was much older than that. Private individuals, private groups of philanthropic men, and some labour unions, had been building individual examples of such communities for thirty years before. It took all that time of example, of propaganda, of agitation, before Government took hold. When Government did take hold, that handful of communities was of the greatest value in furnishing experience of what to do and what not to do, of where and why there had been success, where and why there had been failure.

So I would also stress the *positive* value of the individual example, the importance to any great planning of having carried out individual examples, experiments if you like, that can be seen, examined, studied to see whether they work and how they work. This is of especial value in a large country such as India where the solutions in each locality and province may be quite different from those in others. This variety in experience permits the later planners to compare the elements in each, and to use the best elements for the work that comes later.

If you agree that creating individual examples is valuable, and that it is vital to be ready to create them as soon as the War is over, then you have no time to lose. Even in countries where planning and design technique are more advanced, the adequate development of a community for some hundreds of families for example, takes not less than six to nine months. Here it will certainly take longer because there is so much information to be gathered in such matters as family incomes, places of work, sizes of families, types of construction, types of homes desired and types of homes that people can afford, desirable kinds and aggregations of shops of which I have not yet seen any good examples in India; what kind of street system will work out best and most safely in the motor-age—a problem possibly more serious in India than in Western countries because of your present very narrow crooked roads and absence of side-walks; whether city residents want to and can cultivate gardens; and other similar questions to be answered if you are to get the most liveable, most durable community. In your villages there are possibly even more uncharted problems to be solved, connected with land tenure, distance from home to farm or pasture, the possibility or necessity of warehouses for carrying over crops from full to lean years, how much in the way of social and community facilities can be provided, etc.

I believe that to plan good communities over here will, in the first instances, take over a year. Of course there will be exceptions to that, as for example an industrial enterprise that knows pretty closely what it wants for its employees; and many of your best communities here are connected with industries, as for example the Bata factory near Budge Budge, the homes for Tata employees at Jamshedpur. But generally speaking, it will take fully a year under the best conditions to do everything that is needed so as to be ready to build.

There are various things you can do or start to do right now—and as we are in Calcutta I will talk in terms of Calcutta. On a large scale, you can familiarize yourselves with the work of the Improvement Trust, and create an active public opinion behind it which should make it still more useful. One drawback is that all their work is restricted to Calcutta proper—they do not operate in Howrah and in surrounding areas which are all part of Calcutta's port and commercial activities though they are separate municipalities. I believe you should organize active understanding and interest in these matters. It would enormously interest those of you who have not seen it, to realize how much important work this Trust has already done—in the way of

street widenings, new streets, parks, sewer and water systems.

I want to tell you also that this Improvement Trust mechanism, which I have not seen anywhere except in the East, contains elements that we in the West have so far sought in vain to achieve. Its ample revenue is assured by definitely assigned tax allotments, as contrasted with the meagre funds our City Planning Commissions receive. And it is not in the position of having to plan and then merely hoping that City Departments will work along with these plans, but, because of its assured funds and its power of excess condemnation—which further increases its funds—it can itself execute the work it plans. You have here an extraordinarily flexible, powerful instrument, and I urge you to take an active interest in it both to broaden it territorially and in respect to its activities in such matters as *bustee* housing and in better permanent control of the kind of buildings erected on the land it acquires.

On the plane of the small community, a cell of the city, which I have talked most about, there are many ways to start work on projects. You have innumerable clubs—*samitis* and *sammilanis*, and *samâjas*, in which a group could associate itself with small committees or individuals of various professional societies such as engineers. You could undoubtedly find a large enough site of land, find out the owner. You would have to find a sympathetic owner, or convince him to be sympathetic, or you might find a site owned by the Corporation or the Improvement Trust. Then you would organize your planning work, make the various investigations I have briefly mentioned, come to conclusions as to the broad outlines of your scheme and later the details, in short—complete your plan. Of course the process of doing that is a subject in itself which cannot be coverted at the tail-end of a single lecture. Study of that technique can be begun out of text-books, and with the help of some members of the visiting armies who have practised these professions.

If you are going to follow the idea of working up some of these projects, a number of people are going to have to put in a lot of free time. And if a serious number of projects are prepared, not all of them of course will be actually built. But this is all part of the game. Whether all are built or not, such co-operative effort is stimulating, is the best education in the world, and one of the best ways to arouse and educate public opinion to an effective interest and understanding of the importance of such developments in their daily lives and happiness. This is the kind of thing many of us did in the U.S.A., and which helped lead to the bigger results, though I assure you we have had our share of disappointments. So will you. But I am sure you will all finally have your share of success, as we did. And above all, I can assure you that if you organize such work and carry it out tenaciously to completion—you will not have wasted your time and effort.

There is one more point I want to meet. I have before this, strongly urged my Indian friends to lose no time in starting to explore the physical and the spiritual possibilities of such communities, and to get to work realistically to develop them now. Some of them retort that such work is on too small a scale, that there are hundreds of millions of people in India in need of betterment, that they require more food, better education, and a host of other things. To this I say that no matter what you do finally. But just because there may not be enough doctors in India or enough education, does the doctor refuse to treat his patients, or does the teacher refuse to teach? Of course not. The doctor has a mission, and feels it his sacred duty to relieve the ills of his patients and save their lives. The teacher knows that every pupil he can

awaken by education means a worthy future citizen. Every happy community you establish is an important step of progress in itself. Not only it is completely valid and worthwhile in itself, but by its example it will create public understanding and demand for others. If we cannot at once take care of 300,000,000 people, neither has any other country been able to do so. Let us take care of as many thousands as we can, as soon as we can, not neglecting any other efforts in any other fields for the benefit of many millions. But in community building, you must now being in earnest.

POST-WAR PLANNING IN STATES

By K. S. Srikantan, M.A.

The atmosphere is charged with the talk of industrial planning. Hardly a day passes without the press or the platform giving us some idea of a new scheme of planning in some part of India. Suggestions ranging from thorough-going industrialization to unadulterated socialism have been made. As a matter of fact the suggestions made and the solutions offered for the present economic maladies are so numerous that one who tries to understand them is lost in a labyrinth of conflicting ideas.

There appears, however, to be a general agreement in regard to the question of industrialization. Industry, wisely initiated and controlled and kept far short of adventure and speculation —kept in reasonable relationship to the State's resources—will make and distribute wealth. Wise planning must regard the distribution of wealth as of equal importance with the making of it. Further, industry will enrich the State and increase its resources for every sort of welfare undertaking. For example, it can safely be said that without considerable industrial development there can never be universal education, nor such general prosperity as will make possible adequate leisure and the means for the best employment of this.

It is, however, strange that very few of the economists and industrialists have given in their plans a proper place to small and cottage industries, although emphasis on the importance of these industries has been again and again laid by some of India's outstanding men. These industries have received so far only what I may call 'lip-sympathy' from these planners. They do not seem to realize that the whole fabric of Indian civilization is bound up with the survival and expansion of cottage industries. Whether one likes it or not, it is impossible to exterminate the potters, cobblers, tinkers, and others who form the warp and woof of Indian society.

To neglect them is to overlook India's real needs. The fear that they will be swamped and ultimately destroyed by modern industry is, perhaps, groundless. Eighty-five per cent of the million workers employed in industry in 1931 were engaged in small and cottage industries, and there is no reason to think that industrialization will seriously alter this proportion. Japanese experience shows that small industries can occupy an important place in modern industrial economy and can exist side by side with large-scale industries. The relation between the two is partly competitive and partly complementary. Where they are competitive, it may be necessary through a public organization, to demarcate the lines of division between the two and, in the case of the handloom for instance, to specify the varieties of cloth that should be reserved for it. Where they are complementary there is less difficulty, indeed some of the smaller industries would be auxiliary to large-scale industries.

Ideas like the above have shaped the policy of industrial planning in one of

the major States in Central India, the Holkar State, Indore. The opinion of the writer is that the Indian States should give a lead in a policy of proper industrial planning. People have a right to look to them for a lead in regard to the revival, improvement, and expansion of small and cottage industries.

Problems relating to industries and industrial planning in post-war years in States as in British India are mainly two.

(1) The problem of adjustment arising out of the demobilization of technical and other labour from war industries.

(2) The problem of planning the development of industries in the next few years.

These two problems, though apparently different, are inter-related and can be considered together. Every State is going to be faced with the problem of employment of demobilized soldiers. No one can deny that these deserve the best consideration at the hands of the State authorities. It is needless to add that unless steps are taken from now to provide them with suitable employment, it would be difficult to employ them in suitable services, and much less to help them to lead the standard of life that they might have been accustomed to lead during the period of their active service. It is, therefore, necessary that every State should take up immediately the question and prepare from now a list of such people who are now on active service and gather detailed information about each individual regarding his qualifications and any special training that he might have received during the period of his active service. On account of the extreme urgency of the matter every State should set up a 'Planning Committee' with officials and non-officials under the chairmanship of the Director of Industries to chalk out ways and means of absorbing them. This Committee should be charged with the duty of making detailed recommendations concerning the exact nature of the help that the State might give to these persons so as to enable them to stand on their own legs.

When one thinks of the problem of the demobilized soldiers, one cannot refrain from suggesting the need for making a list of cottage industries that would be suitable to them, so that they could live in their own villages and at the same time earn enough to enable them to live a decent life. Steps should be taken from now to start a 'Central Institute of Cottage Industries' where some of these demobilized soldiers could be given a short training in some selected industries.

In fact, in view of the national and permanent importance of cottage industries, I may even suggest that the Government of India may consider the possibility of starting a 'Central Institute of Cottage Industries' for the whole of India where intensive training could be given in several cottage industries which are unfortunately becoming extinct. The ideal institute that the writer is visualizing would mean an investment of some crores of rupees, but in view of its importance, both cultural and economic, the expenditure is worth incurring. The machinery of the Government of India is so huge that it cannot be moved early. I, therefore, suggest that the major States in India do set up an institute like the one above so that they may give a lead in this to the Government of India.

Within a few years following the War, industries in the States may have to face a depression and a general downward movement of prices resulting in the growth of unemployment and under-employment. To face these difficulties, it is necessary to plan from now a policy of constructing public utility concerns, designed to distribute purchasing power and stimulate at once construction of roads, hydro-electricity schemes, irrigation works which would go a long way in helping the public

and the State at the same time. But the necessary plans and estimates should be prepared from now. In this connection the examples of Mysore and Jaipur deserve our notice. It is possible that before long Mysore may publish a comprehensive report on its plans. Even now, however, the information available shows that the target aimed at is a 100% increase in five years in the per-capita income of the people of the State. The plan proposes to achieve this by intensifying cultivation, improved irrigation, and better manure.

'Industrial development is to be pursued along two lines. Mysore must aim at producing all the consumers' goods, take up standardization of railways and replacement of rolling stocks. And the electrification of suburban railways have also been thought of. The State has already planned for great advance in the sphere of Hydro-electrical power. The present production of 70,000 k.w. is increased threefold. The plan envisages an expenditure of 400 crores.'

Certain States have taken advantage of the times and floated loans. No time is better suited for such a policy than the present one. It is hoped that the other States will soon follow suit and float similar loans and earmark them for productive purposes.

In a general way the State should be prepared to assist in a policy of industrialization; but it should not undertake functions which can efficiently be discharged by private enterprise. The State should regulate the conditions of labour and hours of work, and may provide information and supply power when available. Steps should from now be taken to make the power house a really central one giving power to all industries including the mills. In special cases, even a part of the investment may be taken up by the State. But risk-bearing in industry, is not, as a rule, a function which should be discharged by the State except in the case of public utility undertakings such as water works, electrical concerns, telephones, etc., which should be operated with consideration of social advantage rather than of raising revenue. Nor does there seem to be any objection to the official operation of concerns of a semi-commercial character possessing public utility. The running of motor buses for local traffic by municipalities and the organization of a tourist industry by the State are examples under this category and may be taken up with advantage. A committee has already been set up to go into this question for the city of Indore.

Certain proposals for the establishment of large and medium scale industries have been outlined by the Director of Industries. These include industries as cement, mineral acids and alum, boots and shoes, tanning, oil mill, rectified spirit, paper (handmade and mill) hosiery, porcelain goods, starch, silk, rayon, soap, etc. In the development of these and other industries, it should be remembered that the industries selected should be such as promise continued prosperity in post-war years. The starting of every industry should be preceded by a detailed investigation into the technical and economic factors affecting the industry. Great vigilance is necessary not only in the selection of site and machinery but also in respect of experience and standing of business men and technicians who are to have directive positions in the concerns. To examine in detail new proposals for industry, it is desirable for the State to have a number of expert scientific and technical consultants and an economic advisory body of the kind that has already been set up in the Holkar State. The development of cottage industries as already remarked forms an important aspect of post-war reconstruction in the Holkar State. To assist the marketing of products, there should be a central emporium of handicrafts with a sales depart-

ment having as many sections as possible. It should distribute price lists and catalogues, establish agencies, get in touch with Trade Commissioners of the Government of India in other countries, and have stalls in exhibitions. It should be assisted by a staff of marketing officers to be posted in different provinces and States in India. Government might also consider the adoption of State marks guaranteeing to the purchaser the authenticity and genuineness of the products particularly in such trades as precious metal work, ivory carvings, textile fabrics, etc. It is also necessary to have a central polytechnic which should impart instruction to the artisans in improved methods of production and to study the way in which the talent available may be adopted to produce new things that can go on the market. As regards the larger field of private production it would be desirable to start multi-purpose co-operative societies. These will finance the artisans not in money but by supplying them with tools, raw materials and other reasonable needs, and the accounts will be kept in money. It should not be forgotten that several cottage industries can be made to thrive on a single large-scale industry. Decentralization has gone so far in Japan that even bicycles are made on a cottage industry basis. In any scheme of post-war planning, the State should not neglect to explore the possibilities of establishing a co-ordination between large and small-scale industries.

Besides large and small industries in cities, the development of rural industries subsidiary to agriculture necessary for improving the economic well-being of the rural population requires careful consideration. There seem to be excellent prospects for the development of woollen industry and sericulture in the State. The methods of marketing wool by grading will increase the agriculturist's revenue from this source. Demonstration in the methods of clipping wool and arrangements for scientific sheep-breeding should be organized by the State.

It is to be noted that sericulture is possible only where labour is cheap, efficient, and abundant. It is because of this reason that Japan and China have acquired predominance in this industry, while in France and Italy it is already on the decline. Sericulture cannot profitably be conducted on hired labour, and it will pay only as a subsidiary occupation for families whose members can cultivate mulberry and rear silk-worms. In a village having the silk industry, a large number of families find such subsidiary occupations as plucking leaves, digging, weeding, pruning, not to speak of the several processes connected with rearing worms and reeling cocoons. Even the artisans find additional employment in the manufacture of appliances required for the industry. It is, thus, an admirable subsidiary occupation for an agriculturist. Mulberry can be grown on small plots of land ranging from a quarter of an acre to a couple of acres either as a dry or an irrigated crop; and it is the mulberry garden that is the principal investment in the industry. The other requirements and the equipments of the industry are very few. The ryot's house can serve as the place of manufacture and his wife and children can supply the necessary labour. Since the worms are reared inside the house and are fed only a few times daily at long intervals, there is not much exertion.

One need not have any hesitation about the demand for silk. All the silk in the Holkar State was being imported sometime back from China and Japan or some other provinces in India. Statistics tell us that out of a total annual consumption of about four million pounds of raw silk in India, the quantity produced in India itself amounts to one and a half million pounds. During 1937-38 the raw silk

produced in the several silk-producing centres in India was as follows:

Mysore State	...	800,000 lbs.
Bengal	...	400,000 ,,
Kashmir State	...	250,000 ,,
Madras	...	115,000 ,,
Assam	...	10,000 ,,
Punjab	...	5,000 ,,
Bihar	...	1,000 ,,
TOTAL	...	1,581,000 ,,

While the States may not be able to aid the hand-spinning industry, it should assist the hand-loom industry by starting co-operative societies and by organizing production centres at important places. The starting of a textile branch in the proposed polytechnic may be a further aid to this industry. There is no easier solution to the problem of improving the handloom weavers than to take the aid of the huge mills which can easily purchase all that the weavers produce, finish them, and sell them to the public. If the mills care, they can do this in no time.

OUR EDUCATION: A RETROSPECT

BY MRS. SWARNAPRABHA SEN

Education is very often supposed to be a mere item of luxury in the make-up of the civilization which we profess; an item which has already been relegated to tradition, so that the vitalizing sense—the only sense in which the word is to be understood—is lost to view in common talk. But the luxury idea, however wide-spread, is as far from the truth as possible, and this will bear repetition. Education is no make-believe; and its history guides us to the future of mankind. This is why after every disaster, men turn to the thought of a 'new' education which will escape the dangers and defects of the old.

We can best understand ourselves, or hope to be understood by our successors, only in the light of the past, by the study of the generation which has made the present and in that way endeavoured to mould the future. If we carefully review and analyse the changes that have occurred during the century or a period of hundred years just over —changes in the thought and actions of different groups of individuals in society, it may serve to point the way we should traverse in future and the pitfalls of which we should beware. To form an idea of our society would require an understanding of its interests, its morals, its social ideals, its politics; and then is possible a reconstruction of it on the basis of the materials thus made available; educational plannings on other basis would be an absurdity. Virtually it means the history of the development of the minds of the people. Our mind is like a budding flower; the golden ray which kisses it into life is the light of education. Education draws forth man's inherent capacity, nourishes and ennobles his mind and body, lends him vitality and sends him out into the world to get seasoned in the struggle that life entails, a struggle for which he has become fitted by the process of education itself. It is thus an essential part of human life and cannot be neglected in any scheme of progress, cultural, political, social, or economic.

Events and circumstances, differences of environment and inheritance have no doubt their influence upon the personal destinies of men and women and determine the life of an ordinary individual, but education is the chief factor that carves out our path in life. Education is the thing which can make man rise above circumstances and enables him, so far as possible, to struggle against what seems a perverse destiny.

The burning question of the day, the problem of all problems today, is concerned with education. We are living through one of the very great moments in the history of the world and the Indian horizon seems to be heavily clouded. But our leaders feel that out of this clouded horizon they will see the destiny of India unfold itself, and they visualize a greater India evolved out of this present chaos. Science and education are the two things that can help us to keep up with world movements and build us a greater India and make the Indians a nation. An analysis of the problem of education is, therefore, likely to help us clear the hurdles in our way to the realization and perfection of a new order of things for India. What is the fundamental aim of education, how does it affect the formation of society, how far does it help the growth of a nation, what is its relation to the State, who should be entrusted with the burden of carrying it to the members of society—these are questions that have set people thinking in the past, and are still a matter of deep concern in all countries. The achievements of Soviet Russia in recent times lend romance to the possibilities of education and contribute an optimistic outlook to the situation.

In India the problem of education like all other problems has its distinctiveness. Indian history of the last hundred years presents to us a series of changes—strange changes and remarkable developments—and a study of the same leads us automatically to an analysis, a survey of the educational activities of the period. And education is being more and more recognized as a major subject of study. The universities are going in for new courses in the principles and history of education and the Government department of education has recognized the importance of the subject; research studies are being undertaken and hundreds of young Indians are qualifying every year for efficient teachership by attending special courses on the subject in the different centres of the world for the study of education. The last fifteen years have seen a marvellous development on this point. Dr. Maria Montessori's visit to India from this particular view-point has been very significant—and nursery schools and similar institutions enjoy a respectability rare to imagine twenty years ago. At Dacca, Patna, Calcutta, and elsewhere there has been provision for the training of teachers, and the educational policy of the Government of India is being rightly subjected to scrutiny from different points by an enlightened public. Planning is in the air, and education has come in for its share.

Though the subject of modern education has been ennobled in the imagination of an enlightened India, it is almost as old as the establishment of British rule in India. To form an idea of the existing system of education in Bengal and its influence on the Bengalees, it will be instructive to pause and look back in order to trace the result to its cause and the condition then existing, and to the factors that brought it about.

As we dwell over the past, we are inevitably reminded of Raja Rammohun Roy, a personality that rose far above his contemporaries. The development of an educational policy for the country was but one of Raja Rammohun's manifold activities. With rare insight, even in those days, he sensed that education was a necessity for its own sake, it was an essential item in the building up of life, it was in itself the building up of life, and it had to be spread far and wide and taken into the heart of the country. He was searching for the right lines on which it had to be done. The British had already consolidated their power in the country and brought along with them, behind the materialistic paraphernalia of the East India Company, an altoge-

ther different culture—a culture that was very much alive—and the Raja with his genius and foresight had envisaged a new outlook on life for the millions of his countrymen. But his educational policy was in conflict with those Britishers who thought that the best way of spreading education in India would be to make accessible the Oriental works which were as much a wonder and a revelation to them as Western culture, science, and history were to the Indians. Therefore it gave rise to a controversy and there were two parties. The Orientalists, who were for the old system, were for improving the method already in existence, the traditional ways of the *pâthshâlâ*. But the Raja and his party wanted that an altogether new system should be introduced. He was second to none in his love for the country and its culture; and in his day, he was one of the most learned men in the Oriental studies in their comprehensiveness as well as in their detail. But he realized the great need for a change. The gleam that had inspired him and caught his fancy was the golden light of Western education with its objective and experimental science. He foresaw for Indians the need of a scientific education, suitable for the practical requirements of life. If India had to march with the course of time, if it had not to lag behind, Indians, he felt, should be given a practical education comprising European science and culture, and that education should be given in English. This change in the system—introduction of a foreign language as the medium—did not meet with welcome with all the sections of leading public thought, and many were the difficulties in his way. Hot discussions followed; but he was always ready with arguments, and he succeeded in introducing a system of education which would 'embrace Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Astronomy, with other useful sciences'. His study of Western civilization led him to appreciate a synthetic ideal of education in which there should be provision for science side by side with culture, the modern spirit of Western civilization synthesized with the ancient culture of the East. The best of the East and the best of the West—that was his ideal for the future India, and that was why he was opposed to mere Oriental studies divorced from Western scientific knowledge.

Such an ideal found support in those leaders of thought and moulders of public opinion whose control on the Bengali mind has contributed not a little towards the shaping of events in modern times. Bankimchandra, though dissatisfied with the system of grants-in-aid for popularizing education, appreciated the harmonious blend of diverse elements advocated by Auguste Comte, and in his *Ânandamath* advocated the acquirement of knowledge of the external world from Western masters, which was to be combined with the knowledge of the spirit to be learnt from Eastern masters. Rabindranath could never tolerate the idea of any exclusiveness in the matter of knowledge, and he was all along an advocate of a thorough catholicity in matters of education, not indeed to the extent of losing hold of India's spiritual heritage, but strengthening it by acquisition from every source. Swami Vivekananda, who had captured the minds of Indian youth after his return from a successful tour in Europe and America, advised all to acquire mastery of the objective world through Western education and at the same time to retain the spiritual training of our ancestors.

In this way there has been a general agreement of successive masters of modern India about the lines of education that India should follow; there has been no advocacy of exclusiveness, and there has been continued activity for a hundred years to attain to that happy blend which has seemed so desirable.

A detailed survey, when undertaken, will show the many attempts to make the pattern a useful one—useful more to the State, however, than to the community itself, and that is where the defect of the system lay.

In the years to come, when the war will be no more and peace will again heal the wounds of humanity, education will be a major subject to tackle, and the planning has already begun. But no planning worth the name can afford to ignore the vital needs of the community concerned, nor can it forget the past. If there has been of late years an increased investigation into the history of Indian education, that only serves to show the signs of the times which we are so often apt to miss.

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA*

By Joseph Campbell

We are here this evening to celebrate the birthday of the Paramahamsa whose epeated experiences of God (God under all forms and God beyond all forms) are the fountain-source of this centre. The inspiration of his ecstasy he communicated to all peoples, of all classes, faiths, races, and nations. Our Centre, here in New York, is a far-flown spark from the fire of that ardent soul.

We are remote from Dakshineswar and the temple where the Master served the Creator-Preserver-and-Destroyer of the world in the form of Devi Bhavatârini, the Divine Mother, the Ferry across the Troubled Seas of Being. We are remote in space from Dakshineswar, and in time from the five decades of the life of Shri Ramakrishna: but space and time (this much we know) are no more than the veils of *mâyâ*; they do not touch that seed-moment which is of the essence of our existence, and wherein we are all one in Brahman, the One without a Second. Even as we sit here enjoying with our senses this beautiful chapel—made festive in honour of a birthday that took place over a century ago and half a world away—in the deepest core of our souls we are identical with the Brahman which then and there broke into the form of Shri Ramakrishna. Calling that fact to mind, we taste something of the sweet Wonder of this moment. For in commemorating this birthday, we are looking, in imagination, through the mirror of space and time, only to contemplate an incarnation of that Self which is, here and now, our very selves.

A birthday festival is precisely a festival in honour of the entrance of Eternity into time; and a birthday celebrated one hundred and eight years after the original event, is a reminder of the dissolution of time in Eternity. We can simply wipe away the illusion of remoteness; we can know that now and here the Paramahamsa sings to us: 'So'ham—I am that! I have no form or name; the all-pervading Self am I.'

But if the annihilation of the mirage of space and time seems an extreme measure, and not quite appropriate when the space has been decorated with flowers for the festival, and the time enriched with discourses and music, then we may regard the moment in another way, and sing with the Gopis of Vrindavana:

> Tell me, friend, how far is the grove
> Where Krishna, my Beloved, dwells?
> His fragrance reaches me even here ;
> But I am tired and can walk no further.

We are in New York. There is a war on. These are terrible days for our civilization. Everyone is behaving in the craziest possible way: it is duty,

* An address delivered at the meeting of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York to celebrate the birthday of Shri Ramakrishna.

now, to be mad. This is the wildest moment in the dance of the terrible Goddess: the moment when everything splits into fire. We require an eye such as that of Shri Ramakrishna to know that even in Her frenzy She is our sweet ferry through the storm. Dancing in an ecstatic mood the Master himself could sing:

Mother, Thou canst not trick me any more,
For I have seen Thy crimson lotus feet.

On this birthday, then, of the Paramahamsa, we may try to fill ourselves with the courage that it takes to love Kâli, the All-terrible, and to see that in the sweetness of these flowers, and in the foulness of the things we are all now doing to each other, the one World Presence reveals Herself, for the delectation of her devotee, who, now and here, as well as eight decades ago in Dakshineswar, sings and dances, joyfully repeating:

Durgâ! Durgâ!
Thy two feet are my boat to cross this world's dark sea.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA*

Da Forest P.O.
Santa Clara Co.
6 Place des Etats Unis
Paris, France
1st Sept. (1900)

My dear Hari,

I learnt everything from your letter. Earlier I had an inkling of some trouble between the full-fledged Vedantist and the Home of Truth—some one wrote that. Such things do occur; wisdom consists in carrying on the work by cleverly keeping all in good humour.

For some time now I have been living *incognito*. I shall stay with the French to pick up their language. I am somewhat freed from worries, that is to say, I have signed the Trust Deed, etc., and sent them to Calcutta. I have not reserved any right or ownership for myself. You now possess everything, and will manage all work by the Master's grace.

I have no longer any desire to kill myself by touring. For the present I feel like settling down somewhere and spending my time among books, etc. I have somewhat mastered the French language; but if I stay among them for a month or two, I shall have proficiency in carrying on conversations well. If one can master this language and German sufficiently, one can virtually become well acquainted with European learning. The people of this France are mere intellectualists, run after worldly things, and firmly believe God and souls to be superstitions; they are extremely loath to talk on such subjects. This is a truly materialistic country! Let me see what the Lord does. But this country is at the head of Western culture, and Paris is the capital of that culture.

Brother, free me from all work connected with preaching. I am now aloof from all that, you manage it yourselves. It is my firm conviction that Mother will get works done through you a hundredfold more than through me.

* Translated from original Bengali.

Many days ago I received a letter from Kali. He must have reached New York by now. Miss Waldo sends news now and then.

I keep sometimes well and sometimes bad. Of late I am again having that massage treatment by Mrs. Waldon, who says, 'You have already recovered !' This much I see—whatever the flatulence, I feel no difficulty in moving, walking, or even climbing. In the morning I take vigorous exercise, and then have a dip in cold water.

Yesterday I went to see the house of the gentleman with whom I shall stay. He is a poor scholar, has his room filled with books, and lives in a flat on the fifth floor. And as there are no lifts in this country like America, one has to climb up and down. But it is no longer trying to me.

There is a beautiful public park round the house. The gentleman cannot speak English; that is a further reason for my going. I shall have to speak French perforce. It is all Mother's will. She knows best what she wants to have done. She never speaks out, 'only keeps mum'. But this much I notice that for a month or so I have been having intense meditation and repetition of the Lord's name.

Please convey my love to Miss Boocke, Miss Bell, Mrs. Aspinel, Miss Beckham, Mr. George, Dr. Logan, and other friends and accept it yourself. My love to all in Los Angeles also.

Yours,
VIVEKANANDA

II

6 Place des Etats Unis
Paris

Dear brother Hari,

Now I am staying on the coastal region of France. The Congress of History of Religions is over. It was not a big affair, some twenty scholars gathered to debate such subjects as the origin of the Shâlagrâma,[1] and the origin of Jehovah, etc. I, too, joined in the discussion.

I am broken down in health and mind. Rest is absolutely needed. To add to this, not only have I none to depend on, but so long as I live, all will depend on me and become very selfish.

. . . Dealings with people are a source of constant worry. So I have freed myself by formally transferring everything to . . . I am now putting it down that no one shall rule singly. All work shall be carried on according to the decisions of the majority . . . I shall feel relieved if a Trust Deed is drawn up on those lines. . . . To let well alone, 'Murâri turned to wood by constantly thinking of his domestic affairs;'[2] I slip off for fear of turning to wood—what of that !

Thus far about this topic. Now do as you all think proper. I have finished my part, and there it ends. I was indebted to the Master, and I have repaid the debt with my life.[3] How shall I describe it to you ! . . .

[1] A stone emblem of Vishnu.

[2] On being asked why Jagannâtha of Puri was wooden, somebody replied humorously, 'One of His wives is sharp-tongued (meaning Satyabhâmâ) and the other is fickle (meaning Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth), one of His sons Manmatha (Cupid) is uncontrollable and conquers the world, He lives in ocean, His bed is on (the coils of the snake) Shesha, and He has Garuda as His carrier—constantly thinking of (these) domestic worries Murâri turned to wood.'

[3] Vide letter of 26 May 1890 to Pramadadas Mitra.

They have sent me a draft deed granting me absolute authority. I have signed everything except the authority clause. . . . Brushing aside G., yourself, K., S., and the new boys, I have conferred authority on R. and B. The Master estimated them highly. This is his work. . . . I have put my signature. All that I may do hereafter will be my work. . . .

I now proceed to do my work. I have repaid the Master's debt with my life. He has no further claim. . . .

What you all are doing is the Master's work. Carry it on. I have done what I had to do, there it ends. Please do not write or tell me about those things any more—I have absolutely no opinion to express on them. . . .

A new chapter begins from now. . . .

NARENDRA

P.S. My love to all.

III

6 Place des Etats Unis

My dear Turiyananda,

Just now received your letter.

Through Mother's will all work will go on; don't be afraid. I shall soon leave for some other place. Perhaps I shall be on a tour of Constantinople and other places for some time. Mother knows what will come next. I have received a letter from Mrs. Wilmot. From this, too, it appears that she is very enthusiastic. Sit firm and free from worries. Everything will be all right. If hearing of the *nâda*, etc. does any one harm he can get rid of it if he gives up meditation for a time and takes to fish and meat. If the body does not become progressively weak, there is no cause for alarm. Practice should be slow.

I shall leave this place before your reply comes. So do not send the reply to this letter here. I have received all the papers of Sarada, and wrote to him lots a few weeks ago. I have a mind to send more later on.

There is no knowing where my next stop will be. This much I can say that I am trying to be free from care.

I received a letter from Kali, too, today. I shall send him a reply tomorrow. The body is somehow rolling on. Work makes it ill, and rest keeps it well—that is all. Mother knows. Nivedita has gone to England. She and Mrs. Bull are collecting funds. She has a mind to run a school at Kishengarh with the girls she got there. Let her do what she can. I do not intervene any more in any matter—that is all.

My love to you. But I have nothing more to advise as regards work.

Yours in service,
VIVEKANANDA

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To Our Readers

Planning is in the air; and we do not see why our readers, too, should not have their plans ready for reconstructing their own post-war Utopias. When we write this, we can very well visualize the anger in many faces at this uncalled for cheap raillery. So we sit thinking and produce Our *Idols and Inspiration*, which gives indication of the spirit that should inform all attempts for betterment . . . . But lest this should be condemned as too airy, we hasten to publish two solid contributions from two men of position—Major Albert Mayer, Architect and Town Planner of New York, U.S.A., and Mr. Srikantan, Director of Commerce and Industries, Holkar State. . . . Mrs. Swarnaprabha Sen, who is already known to our readers, gives a short *résumé* of her previous articles.

Literacy and Culture

Once some persons were crossing a river in a boat. One of them, a pundit, was making a great display of his erudition, saying that he had studied various books—the Vedas and the six systems of philosophy. He asked a fellow-passenger who appeared to be illiterate, 'Do you know the Vedanta or the Sankhya?' 'No, sir,' replied the fellow-passenger. 'Have you not read any philosophy or literature whatsoever?' asked the pundit sardonically. 'No, revered sir,' returned the other meekly, rather bewildered. As the pundit went on expatiating in a vain way on the advantages of book-learning, a storm arose and the boat began to toss heavily. The passengers looked concerned, fearing the boat might sink, and, more than all, the pundit felt utterly despondent in face of danger. Then the other fellow-passenger calmly said to the pundit, 'Sir, can you swim?' 'No,' said the pundit, excited. The passenger laughed and said, 'I don't know any system of philosophy, nor have I read any literature; but I can swim.' To the pundit learning and scholarship constituted the essence of man, and anyone devoid of these was to be given up as lost. There are many who think that there can be no culture without literacy, and who consider unlettered peoples backward, uncivilized, and unfit for self-government. Writing in the *Asia and the Americas* for February 1944, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy discusses the merits and demerits of literacy as it is in evidence today and to what extent it is indispensable to the growth of culture. Western intellectualists often subscribe to the glib assumption that literacy is an unqualified good and an indispensable condition of culture. But as against this, the learned writer points out that there is no necessary connection between literacy and culture. Viewing the problem from the standpoint of an American citizen, he observes that

> to impose our literacy (and our contemporary 'literature') upon a cultural but illiterate people is to destroy their culture in the name of our own.
>
> When we set out to 'educate' the South Sea Islanders, it is generally in order to make them more useful to ourselves (this was admittedly the beginning of 'English education' in India), or to 'convert' them to our way of thinking: . . . The purpose of our educational activities abroad is to assimilate our pupils to our ways of thinking and living.

He pleads for the cultivation of oral literature which has greater advantages and is more permanent than the written one. In ancient India knowledge was imparted to boys and girls, even from a very early age, through the medium of the ear and with the help of the pupil's trained memory. And yet most of these pupils hardly knew how to read or write. The Census reveals that

the number of 'literates' in India is quite small. But this has not stood in the way of her cultural progress. On the other hand she has maintained the tradition of her rich cultural heritage not because of but in spite of the gift of 'literacy' conferred upon her by those who were 'bent by the weight of the white man's burden'. The writer strikes a note of caution in his concluding words:

> Our real concern is with the fallacy involved in the attachment of an absolute value to literacy, and the very dangerous consequences that are involved in the setting up of 'literacy' as a standard by which to measure the cultures of unlettered peoples. Our blind faith in literacy not only obscures for us the significance of other skills, so that we care not under what sub-human conditions a man may have to earn his living, if only he can read, no matter what, in his hours of leisure ; it is also one of the fundamental grounds of inter-racial prejudice and becomes a prime factor in the spiritual impoverishment of all the 'backward' people whom we propose to 'civilize'.

Education is a very necessary and important factor in the intellectual and moral growth of man. Acquaintance with letters stimulates thoughts and ideas, and helps cultural contact between the different peoples of the world. But a mere inability to read or write should not be taken as a sign of absence of culture. True culture is an expression of spirituality, and some highly spiritual men have not been 'literate' in the modern sense.

Present-day World is like a Pilotless Plane

That the unhappy and shrivelled condition of the world today indicated that the great qualities of head and heart possessed by man were being employed for wrong ends was the theme of an illuminating address by Sir S. Radhakrishnan to the alumni of the Benares Hindu University. He said:

> The world is like a pilotless plane ; it has lost its sense of direction. We have knowledge that is power; we require wisdom that is enlightenment.

To the moderner, possession of material wealth and intellectual power is of great importance in solving the problems of this world. But he forgets that these, though necessary, are not enough, and refuses to be guided by the lesson of history. The horrors of the present armageddon leave no doubt that the world has not become any better to live in notwithstanding the fact that man has undisputed command over Nature to a great extent. What is wanted is the proper regulation and direction of the mainsprings of human action through the cultivation of spirituality and faith in God. Calling upon the students to show reverence towards the great ideas which have kept the hoary civilization of India alive, Sir Radhakrishnan laid stress on the imperative need for initiation into a higher life of spirit. The purpose of such a life is to eradicate greed and passion, and ennoble man's motives which will give him the right sort of stimulus for thought and action. The inspiration for such a life can come only from religion.

Speaking to his students on another occasion he said:

> If, in spite of all our progress in science, technique, and wealth, we find ourselves in this condition of sorrow, it is because we have taken a wrong road. We have a philosophy of life, but it is based on an imperfect conception of man's nature and destiny.

Recognition and realization of the indwelling Divinity in man, irrespective of race, class, or nation, is the goal of human endeavour. It is not what or how much resources we possess that matters, but how very rightly we make use of those resources.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

RIGVEDIC CULTURE OF THE PRE-HISTORIC INDUS, VOL. II. BY SWAMI SANKARANANDA. FOREWORD BY SWAMI PRATYAGATMANANDA. *Published by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, Raja Rajkissen Street, Calcutta. Pp. Lii+140. Price Rs. 10.*

In the first volume the author sought to establish through a comparative study of the Vedic and Indus-valley civilizations that the two are identical. The task before the present volume is mainly to evolve a method which may prove successful in 'attacking the main citadel of "ancient mysteries" through the difficult but negotiable moraine of "unseemly" scripts and the dubious but not impassable morass of "uncouth" sounds'. The *tantric* dictionaries have yielded him the key for unlocking the door of 'the dark cave of the science of scripts' and he demonstrates by charts and figures how the Egyptian hieroglyphs as well as the Mohenjo-Daro pictographs, the Sanskrit letters as well as the Chinese scripts, and in fact all the ancient writings can be made to yield their meanings through the guidance of the *tantric* dictionaries.

It is altogether a new and very bold venture undertaken with the zeal of a monk whom no extraneous consideration can draw away from his settled conviction. The conclusions are supported by a plethora of textual evidence and logical insight and there is the stamp of sincerity imprinted on every page. Scholars may not see eye to eye with the author in all his conclusions, but that is no discredit; for complete accord often raises suspicion as to the real worth of a book of research of this type. It is the method of approach, the thought-challenging conclusions, the range of information brought under scrutiny that should be the real test of a book of this kind. We have every hope that the book will draw the attention of all interested in the study of the Mohenjo-Daro culture and the mystery of ancient scripts.

SANSKRIT-BENGALI

BRIHADĀRANYAKA UPANISHAD. EDITED BY SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA. *Published by the Udbodhan Office, 1, Udbodhan Lane, Calcutta. Pp. 480. Price Rs. 5.*

This is the third part of the *Upanishad Granthâvali*, published by the Udbodhan Office. Like its fore-runners it contains the Sanskrit texts with word-for-word paraphrase in Bengali, running translation and notes in Bengali. There is a short introduction dealing with the subject matter of the book, and at the end there are two indexes giving the most important words and sentences.

NEWS AND REPORTS

MAYAVATI CHARITABLE HOSPITAL

REPORT FOR 1943

The Hospital forms one of the activities of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati. From a very humble beginning it has now grown into a full-fledged and well-equipped hospital with 13 beds. It serves a very wide area: patients come even from a distance of 50 or 60 miles, taking 4 or 5 days for the journey.

The total number of patients treated in the year under review in the Indoor Department was 255, of which 202 were cured and discharged, 24 were relieved, 26 were discharged otherwise or left, and 3 died. In the Outdoor Department the total number of patients treated was 11,554, of which 9,427 were new and 2,127 were repeated cases. The cases of surgical operations numbered 101.

We cordially thank all our donors and subscribers who by their continued support have made it possible for us to carry on this humanitarian work in such an out-of-way place.

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA,
President, Advaita Ashrama,
P.O. Mayavati, Dt. Almora, U.P.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX NOVEMBER, 1944 No. 11



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

TRUE HAPPINESS

By Swami Turiyananda

I

One can have everything in the world; but it is rare to have devotion to the feet of the Lord. Without it everything else is vain, for nothing is of any profit. Everybody can know and understand this. Life becomes sweetened if love for Him is developed. Otherwise it becomes a burden. But the Lord has also given you the treasure of love, which makes us very happy. Life becomes fruitful if the time can be spent remembering Him and serving or associating with men of God. It is no mean luck that your inclinations have been so, thanks to the grace of the Master. The great devotee Tulasidas has said that power and influence fall to the lot of sinners even, but only the really fortunate ones gain devotion to God and the company of devotees. It is no wonder that all the Swamis love and care for you, for those who have taken refuge in the Master are the most dear and near ones. Their relations are based on God and are not of this world. I have already had the report of the celebration of Swamiji's birthday at the Math. From now on it will be always on the increase everywhere. They will be preached more and more among the people as days pass. The more the people will know and understand them the more will they realize the real truth, being liberated from the grip of ignorance and being blessed by becoming heirs to pure bliss.

Whatever be the Lord's will, it is for good. There remains no more cause for fear or anxiety if one can remember His lotus feet. Our sincere prayer to Him is that He may graciously allow our minds to dwell on His feet.

II

The fruits of tendencies in process of realization cannot be escaped, but there is no doubt that wisdom lies in thinking of God without much attention to the body. I have heard the Master say, 'Let the pain and the body take care of each other; but thou, O my mind, be happy.' That is to say, 'O my mind, do not be upset if the body suffers from disease, etc.; the body cannot escape

the experiences in store for it. But be thou happy, that is, fix thy mind on God, the Existence-Intelligence-Bliss, and do not worry about the body.' Let whatever happen to the body, but let it not make you forget God. Our earnest prayer to Him is that we may be blessed by following the path shown by Him.

CONVERSATION WITH SWAMI SHIVANANDA

Belur Math, November 1920

At about 8-30 p.m. the Mahapurusha (literally, the great person, i.e., Swami Shivananda) returned to his room (from the shrine). A song in a suppressed tone expressed the joy in his heart. The voice was very sweet and tender. Some monks and devotees had already been waiting for him. When the Mahapurusha sat in his room all prostrated before him one by one and sat down. The room was almost silent; one felt as though none wanted to break the silence. Gradually the conversation developed, and it turned to the topic of spiritual practice. The Mahapurusha said in a self-absorbed tone: 'Night is the time best suited for practice. One should very devoutly meditate and repeat God's name every day; this purifies the mind. If one meditates and repeats the Lord's name devoutly for some time, a godliness persists for ever in the heart, and one gets a foretaste of Bliss. One should not leave one's seat just after meditation, for that prevents the deepening of any mood. On the contrary, one should continue sitting there for some time and thinking of the meditation, after which one should chant some of the most excellent hymns, etc., which are helpful to the meditation. This further intensifies and prolongs the mood and pleasure of meditation. Even after leaving the seat one should not talk with others for a time, but should continue thinking and ruminating mentally. This not only makes the heart very cheerful, it also greatly helps one to continue in a very lofy mood.'

A monk: 'Sir, should we not now and then go out for *tapasyâ* (i.e., spiritual practice accompanied with hardship)? Moreover, are not pilgrimage and mendicancy in various places congenial to the life of a monk?'

Mahapurusha: 'My son, there is the proverb, "A rolling stone gathers no moss." Can one become spiritual or realize God simply by travelling hither and thither? But, of course, it is good now and then to resort to begging from door to door, or to live in solitude or travel a little without resources with a view to eliminating pride and egotism and practising complete dependence on God. There is no doubt that this results in spiritual well-being. But there is no need for persisting in these things continually for years together. Latu Maharaj (i.e., Swami Adbhutananda) would often say, "Where shouldst thou roam about? If thou art a child of Shri Ramakrishna, get thyself fixed in one place." This is perfectly true. "He who has it here, has it there too." Moreover, where will you travel about and for what? He is already in us. That is why the Master sang this song almost daily:

> Stay thou in thyself, O my mind, and don't
>   go to others' houses,
> Seek in thy inner compartments and thou
>   shalt find whatever thou wantest.
> That Philosopher's Stone is a transcendental possession, which can vouchsafe
>   whatever thou seekest;
> What innumerable gems lie scattered at
>   the backdoor of that Lord!

The Mahapurusha repeated charmingly this song several times, and then after a little silence said, 'The highest lesson is imparted at the end of the song: "What innumerable gems lie scattered

at the backdoor of that Lord!" At His door lies everything—enjoyment, emancipation, and even everything up to realization of Brahman. But, my son, one must search, one must eagerly seek for Him. This craving indeed is what is meant by spiritual endeavour. If anyone sincerely wants Him, He becomes gracious. And if through mercy He opens the door a little—awakens *Kulakundalini* (i.e., the coiled up spiritual energy)—you will see that everything is within. But there can be no success unless *Kulakundalini* is awakened through His mercy.'

A devotee: 'Yes, for this reason, Maharaj (i.e., Swami Brahmananda) also said that the door to the realization of Brahman opens when *Kulakundalini* awakes and rises up from the *Mulâdhâra* (lit., the primary receptacle) through the *Sushumnâ*[1] passage.'

Mahapurusha: 'Yes, perfectly true: nothing is possible unless *Kulakundalini* awakes. It is because of this that the Master solicited the Mother with tears thus: "Awake, Mother, arise—wake up, O Mother *Kulakundalini!*" '

Quoting thus the first line, the Mahapurushaji, began singing the song:

Wake up, Mother *Kulakundalini!*
Thou art Bliss Absolute, Thou art Brahman Absolute,
Thou like a sleeping snake residest in the lotus that holds Thee.
On the triangle burns a fire which scorches the body—
Leave Thou the *Mulâdhâra,* Thou wife of Shiva coiling round Him,
Proceed Thou along the *Sushumnâ* passage and reach the *Svâdhishthâna* (lotus),
And pass (gradually) through *Manipura, Anâhata, Vishuddhâ,* and *Ajnâ* (lotuses).[2]
At the thousand-petalled lotus in the head, do Thou unite with Shiva,
And disport with Him at will imparting bliss.

Ah! How can we express the absorption? The Mahapurusha repeated the song thrice and then stopped. A serene beauty lighted up his face; the whole room seemed to be surcharged with the spirit of the song. Thus passed a long time, when the Mahapurusha repeated with great pathos: 'Mother, Mother, Thou Mother of the Universe!' It was not unlike the wail of a motherless child. After a while, regaining somewhat his natural composure, he continued slowly: 'Ah! I cannot recount how often I heard this song from the Master. Some day he would sing this song when fanning the Mother (Kâli) with *Chowri.*[3] Ah, what an ecstatic mood he would be in when singing this song! We would all be dumbfounded. He would have no outward consciousness. The *Chowri* moved slowly, and he sang self-absorbed. What a sweet voice he had! I cannot express in words that deep pathos. Every heart would melt. Could the Mother help not waking up at that pathetic call? And that Mother is *Brahma-Kundalini.*[4] Swamiji used to say, "Do you realize that this time *Brahma-Kundalini* Herself has waked up? This time, at the Master's call, has awoke great *Kundalini* who is *Mahâmâyâ* and through whose will creation, preservation, and destruction take place. No wonder that the individual *Kundalinis* will wake up as a matter of course." It is as a consequence of this that the whole world is responding to this call for a mighty awakening. And that Primal Energy manifested Herself through the body of the Master for the good of this world. Now there is no cause for worry.'

[1] *Canal centralis* in the backbone through which, according to Yogis, the psychic energy passes in its progress upwards, till it unites with cosmic energy at the top.

[2] *Svâdhishthâna,* etc. are nervous centres in the backbone which are energized by the rising *Kundalini.*

[3] The bunch of hairs from a yak's tail used for fanning deities, etc.

[4] i.e., *Kundalini* in Her cosmic aspect, as opposed to *Kundalini* in individuals.

THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

By the Editor

I

Tagore in one of his poems presents a mad man searching for a philosopher's stone oblivious of personal comforts and natural duties, the 'human faces Divine' and the natural beauties all around, and the little bits of bliss and touches of reality making importunities for acceptance. He runs after an ideal of which he lacks even an intellectual foretaste, so that even though the ideal is very often within his reach, he passes by unconcerned, or grasps it unknowingly to throw it away the very next moment. He wants the whole of his ideal, though he lacks the proper mood of receptivity; and the ideal, though present before him in all its multiplicity, escapes his notice. He is so much engrossed in his search that the real object of search has gone out of his purview. A search—a search—it is all a mad search for the philosopher's stone!

Planning is in the air—planning in all fields of human activity. There are plans for industrialization, plans for rehabilitation of re-occupied territories, plans for stability of exchange, plans for international peace, and even plans for systematization of outlooks which go by the name of systems of philosophy and religion. But bewildered we ask, What are these for? There does not seem to be any well defined and universally acceptable goal in all these plannings. The world may be well charted and laid out with roads, railways, steamship lines, air routes, factories, banks, leagues of nations, and international police organizations; and systems of philosophy may drill or 'condition' all human minds in accordance with the needs of a vaguely defined future. But the unsophisticated mind still asks, What are all these for? The mind unimposed by all the marshalling of facts and figures cries out in agony, 'येनाहं नामृता स्यां किमहं तेन कुर्याम् —what shall I do with all this that cannot make me immortal?' The modern search for a better order of things has thus ended in a fiasco—it is all a mad running after the philosopher's stone. The modern age boasts of its realism, empiricism, pragmatism, and materialism; and yet, paradoxically enough, it is the most unrealistic of all ages, because it accepts madness as sanity, and plans as goals; it overlooks facts and human possibilities as they are and the universal goals towards which they should be guided; and it builds castles in the air, which satisfy only the planners and propagandists but leave humanity cold and uninspired. Besides, its ill-defined goal is forgotten sooner than adumbrated, and society is left with mere institutions, schemes, and quests.

The modern age is supposed to have achieved a universality of view unattained by any former age, and yet how parochial and full of mistrust it is! The colonies are supposed to be the domestic concerns of the ruling nations, and even allies must not be too inquisitive about their internal affairs lest the ruling races should be embarrassed and should in retaliation poke their noses into the affairs of the critics themselves. The daily papers are full of such threats and counter-threats. Thus Senator Chandler of Kentucky declared in the U.S.A. Senate on 28 August, 1944, 'I believe in co-operating with our Allies; but only by knowing the truth of the situation in other countries can we hope for a genuine co-operative peace.' The same paper which printed this news also gave the British reaction to such an attitude thus: 'A spokesman asserted, that as

the British press "refrains from commenting on American domestic affairs, the same thing is expected of the Americans" to maintain Anglo-American solidarity' (*The Hindusthan Standard*, 3 September, 1944). In other words truth must not be too obtrusive; it must fit into the existing order of things so that peace, i.e., the assured supremacy of the ruling races, may not be jeopardized. This may be a pragmatic point of view; but is it realistic in any sense? Does the *public* truth here correspond with actual facts or with the demands of universal justice and equity?

Nor are politicians alone subject to such myopic visions of truth due to their pre-occupation with mere selfish ends. We are pained to see that even religious leaders often talk in a way which is not above criticism. *The Hindusthan Standard* of 2 September reported thus the Pope's speech, delivered on 1 September:

> At the end of this war . . . a violent struggle will begin between various currents of thought. Among these tendencies *Christian ideals* must assure the social future. . . . There is nothing we desire more than that peace, security, and prosperity should be given to the greater part of *Christian humanity*. (Italics are ours).

His Holiness displayed some breadth of outlook in referring to *Christian ideals* and *Christian humanity* and did not confine His benedictions to His *Catholic ideals* and *Catholic humanity*. We are thankful to His Holiness for that small mercy. But what about Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, and other *ideals* and *humanities*? His Holiness did of course speak of 'mankind' and 'humanity'; but the universe of discourse leaves little doubt in our minds as to the real implications of those words. The War has produced many memorable words and phrases and *Christian humanity* is not a very unwelcome intruder. Nay, we welcome it, since it exposes the real state of things. We note that when universality is being planned, one of the greatest leaders of thought disdains to speak in terms of religion and spirituality pure and simple! Evidently, in his views Semitic exclusiveness is the highest achievement of modern civilization!

II

Turning to India, our attention is drawn to what Mr. Edward Thompson writes in the *Spectator* regarding the demand for Pakistan:

> Never have we got into a worse spin even in India than by making all political progress depend upon an arrangement which, if made, would be a piece of 'damnable cheek' and would not be worth the paper on which it is written.

And yet some people's hearts are set on this 'damnable cheek,' since they are out not really for Hindu-Muslim unity but for a temporary make-shift to get certain self-interests assured. A disinterested outlook is entirely lacking.

As for the lop-sided industrial development of the world, it is aptly summarized by Mr. N. R. Sarkar thus:

> The entire world's production of economic goods and services, averaged over the decade 1925-34, was 254 milliard I. U. (International Units) per year: As much as 119 milliards or nearly 50 p.c. of this was produced in the four largest economic units, viz. U. S. A., Great Britain, Germany, and France containing between them only 13 p.c. of the world's population . . . . while the returns reaped by the mother countries have been considerable, the people of the colonies and dependencies were doomed to a life of semi-starvation with a hopelessly low standard of living.

The race problem was brought to the forefront by Sir S. Radhakrishnan in a speech at Darbhanga.

> When the principle of race equality was raised at the Versailles Treaty it was negatived. If we do not accept it at this peace, it only means that we agree with Hitler in believing in superior and inferior races. . . . The present war is a conflict between two great passions, namely, passion for freedom and passion for domination.

III

Thus our plans almost always overshoot or undershoot the mark; and failure is our lot, since we do not take into cognizance all the factors involved.

And as for the mark itself, oftener than not, we have at most a hazy picture of it; or if our hearts are set on things which we cannot openly avow, our plans serve ends other than those which they are advertised for. A Divine pull does of course underlie all our endeavours for transcending our present limitations, for it is God alone who is the source of all creative efforts and intellectual flights. But the modern world lacks the detached view which alone can give a vision of the Divinity at work. To put the matter more realistically, the Hindus believe that all human efforts are partial manifestations of Divine energy on the mundane plane; but these manifestations themselves may not appear to be so, due to the pre-occupations of the actors and the observers. Passing through our spectacles the Divine light gets blurred and coloured. To get a truer view of the Divinity informing all our efforts we must cultivate a more detached view of things and not be swayed by selfish considerations. Humanity searches unconsciously for an ultimate goal, but in the absence of this non-attachment, this supra-mundane poise, that goal appears as a philosopher's stone—a magical thing that will turn everything into gold or things of mundane value; and lucre hides the face of truth—'हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम्'. The *Ishopanishad* realized this tendency to which humanity is heir to, and hence it advised thus:

> Cover with Divinity all these transient things of this evanescent world. By such a non-attachment do thou enjoy. Off with this greed, for does wealth really belong to anyone?

One illustration will suffice to show what fools we make of ourselves when the true goals are pushed out of view by greed. Let us turn to nationalism. It is supposed to stand for certain well defined ideas and ideals and certain geographical boundaries and racial traits. But on closer scrutiny it reveals nothing more than organized selfishness; the idealism that persists, does so in spite of this nationalism and not because of it. For instance, a section of humanity calls itself a nation; but through colonization, immigration, emigration, invasion, conquest, trade, commerce, and education, it soon loses its racial homogeneity. Its ideas and ideals, too, undergo constant changes till they lose any distinctiveness. None the less, as days roll by, unity through outer conformity is insisted on, so that the nation may be a strong instrument of offence and defence for acquiring and retaining more and more of the comforts of this world.

It is no exaggeration, then, to say that human society is at present drifting aimlessly down the stream of self-seeking. It has its arts, sciences, philosophies, and religions—but they are not in touch with the real core of life since they are not in touch with Reality either in Its immanence or transcendence. By denying Reality which is the origin, basis, and goal of life, humanity is engaged in a mad pursuit of building systems which crush under their own weight and smother their creators. All our learning, all our civilization, all our culture avail nothing against the dead weight of this inert unreality. All the wealth hoarded and all the natural beauties vouchsafed cannot remove the poverty of our souls. All the education imparted and all the poetic inspiration granted cannot fill our imagination with a sense of bliss and freedom.

The present ailment of the world reminds us of the story of Nârada and Sanatkumâra as told in the *Chhândogya Upanishad*, and the solution, too, is found there. Nârada approaches Sanatkumâra with a view to getting rid of his mental dissatisfaction which haunts him in spite of his high culture. Says he,

'Sir, I have read the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Sâmaveda, the Atharvaveda which is the fourth, histories and mythologies which are the fifth, grammar, the modes of satisfying the manes,

mathematics, the science of natural phenomena, economics, logic, politics, the ancillary Vedic literature, physics, the science of war, astronomy, the science of snakes, and music.' But, sir, learned though I am, I am simply a trader in words; I do not know what I really am. But I have heard, sir, from people like you, that Self-knowledge removes sorrow. Such as I am, I am deep in misery. Sir, kindly lead me across this ocean of misery.'

Sanatkumâra leads his disciple step by step to the highest knowledge where the latter realizes that his puny self is none other than the cosmic Self. He is also taught that partial views always lead to misery—it is the universal view that makes one happy: 'That which is Infinity, is indeed bliss; there can be no happiness in limited things, Infinity indeed is happiness' (*Chhândogya Upanishad*, VII. i—xxvi).

This mad world must now be weaned from its vain search for the philosopher's stone, which has given it only a false philosophy of searching for sordid ends and left it with a stone—mere machines and plans—which can give neither life nor light but can only smother them and cover the Light. The world must now retrace its steps to where the quest started from—the quest for immortality, the quest for that by 'getting which all other gains look smaller, and being established in which one is not perturbed even by the greatest calamity' (Gita, VI. 22).

People are chary of talking and thinking about fundamentals, and yet in everyday talk and deed how invariably we spin round fundamentals! Do we not make 'sweeping generalizations'? Do we not insist on 'principles'? Do we not take for granted certain 'axioms'? Do we not accept certain things as 'brute facts'? May be, we do so unknowingly. All that is required for a better order of things is to do so knowingly. And this is what is meant by saying that we must be acquainted with basic truths or that we must define our goals more clearly. For it is to this goallessness that all the modern ailments can be traced. And, as we have shown, the real goal, the lasting goal can be nothing short of Infinity or Reality that should inform all the partial adumbrations, for partial views we shall continue to have so long as humanity does not progress spiritually. The difference between the old, halting, and goalless progress and the future intelligently directed progress will be that in future we shall readily acknowledge our drawbacks and not have recourse to sophistry and self-hypnotism. There can be no peace on earth till the goal is visualized as the progress of humanity as a whole and not of mere *Christian humanity*, or Western humanity. And the progress should have a direction—a direction towards Infinity and Reality and not towards self-aggrandizement and planned propaganda for hypnotizing the proletariat and the backward races.

IV

These two ideas are important—Infinity and Reality. We have dealt with the former idea to some extent. Our main concern here is with the second. Our goal is Ultimate Reality which is also Infinity. But both Reality and Infinity admit of degrees of manifestation in the phenomenal plane, and a realistic outlook is that which never neglects the modicum of Truth manifested in each stage. All individuals and societies are evolving in their own way towards the fullest manifestation of the Divinity in them. And each manifestation is a partial revelation of the Ultimate, all-comprehensive, and all-transcending truth which is Infinity. Thus in the matter-of-fact world we talk of the genius of a people, of cultural levels, racial bias, and national goals. Any true plan must take into consideration not only these partial manifestations, tendencies, and possibilities, but it must also relate these with the ultimate universal goal. Besides, development must be from within, for freedom

alone can lead to freedom while slavery perpetuates slavery. Each group must forge its own destiny in consonance with universality. This does not, however, mean that all outside help and co-operation should be eschewed; on the contrary it presupposes contact with the outside at all possible points; only that help or co-operation should not be a subterfuge for domination—economic, political, cultural, moral, or spiritual; and the acceptance must not be mere imitation, but conscious assimilation according to need and capacity.

In India, for instance, we seldom take a realistic outlook. As is natural with a downtrodden nation, we either run after foreign ideas and institutions with the self-abandon of an upstart or reject them with the flourish of an aristocrat who has nothing left but the memory of a bygone prosperity. And foreigners, too, think that what is good for London or New York is equally good for Calcutta or Bombay, and they curse us when we either do not accept their plans or cannot use them to any advantage. Thus all our talks about the future seem to be carried on in a very unreal atmosphere.

Then there is the absence of a true appreciation of the possibilities of a race. If a race has fallen down or if it has not evolved to the extent that other more fortunate races have done, it is inferred that the race is doomed to be always so. How often we forget that it is hardly possible to apply the same standard of judgement everywhere! One race may produce military geniuses, others may bring out men of sterling worth in art, science, philosophy, or religion. The only standard of judgement that should be applied in such cases is the goal towards which these races are progressing. If they stagnate where they are, if they refuse to look beyond their national and cultural borders, if they do not evolve consciously towards Infinity and help others to do so, they must be pronounced as having failed in their mission, and sooner or later they are bound to come to grief and bring misery on others. This is true of the aggressive nations as well as the submissive ones; for if the aggressors prostitute their national gifts for exploiting others, the oppressed people are no less guilty in so far as they tempt others to do so. And so the whole world suffers from a want of realism and idealism—a lack of proper appraisal of the world as it is and an ignorance of the true goal towards which each human group should advance.

And thus we return to the point from where we started: The modern world is mad after the philosopher's stone, though it does not know what it actually is; and its mad search for it continues interminably, though it has it in part already. In the absence of a clearly recognized and universally accepted goal to guide the way and proper acquaintance with the nature of the problems it has to deal with, modern society is like a lurching boat without a compass in a stormy sea and with heavy goods arranged haphazardly and jostling against one another. The irrationality and discomfort of the situation often compell some leaders to accept any goal that appeals for the moment—to make for any bit of solid land, rocky or arid though it be, that looms in the horizon; some begin planning and philosophizing like idle dreamers, while others, in their frenzy, do not care so much for the distant land but turn everything in the boat topsyturvy with the slogan 'make it or mar it'.

In fact, modern society suffers from what may be called a split of personality. It is either too idealistic or too realistic. Thus our leaders of thought and action either specialize in forging empty systems of philosophy—the creations of frenzied imagination or inflated intellect which have no touch with either spiritual fundamentals or mundane actualities; or they make scientific discoveries and achieve wonderful feats of engineering without knowing how to correlate them to life's goal. For systems cannot surely inspire men to higher

achievements, and discoveries cannot remove the poverty of souls. The result is that through a search for the philosopher's stone, the philosophers come across philosophies—empty and misguiding plans and systems, and the men of action get only stones—lifeless institutions and missiles of death! The remedy lies not in a more intensified aimless search, but self-collected meditation, not in a hankering for achieving something, but prayer for a higher light.

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA: THE SAVIOUR OF THE FUTURE

By Swami Nikhilananda

Everywhere in the universe one sees unceasing activity. All objects, animate and inanimate, are active. Even such apparently inert things as stones and rocks are in reality arenas of activity. Space itself, according to science, is vibrating.

Man is restless. Whether awake or asleep, he is never inactive. The action of the heart and lungs does not stop in sleep. The mind functions in dreams. The restless mind of man is always on the trail of new discoveries. Constant research is going on in the fields of art, science, medicine, religion, politics, and all branches of knowledge. A belief in progress sustains the workers in their fields of research. We flatter ourselves with the notion that we are creating a better and newer civilization. It is our objective to eliminate evil and multiply good. Some imaginative minds foresee a future when evil will be entirely eliminated and nothing but good will remain. We are told of the immense progress made in medicine. Surgery and drugs have minimized the chances of death, and men who a few years ago had no chance of survival are now given the joy of prolonging useless lives. The war hospitals are being filled with 'basket' cases. An idiot living in a backwoods district suffers from a brain ailment. He is flown to a big city and attended by the best surgeon. A brain tumor is located. By a successful operation he is saved from the jaws of death. We feel so proud of science. But with the help of the same science a bomb is dropped on a college campus and dozens of promising young men are blown to bits. Man is bewildered and asks himself whether the clock of progress really moves forward or backward.

Sometimes we wonder whether what is called progress is not, after all, like the figures one sees in the rotation of a kaleidoscope. To be sure, there is a change. The pattern produced may be new. But the number of glass pieces is fixed. Some thoughtful people believe that all the major improvements in human society in the fields of art, literature, ethics, music, mysticism, and even in what is known as the scientific method of thinking, were made twenty-five hundred years ago. Since then nothing of fundamental value has been added to human knowledge. Paul Deussen remarked that the last word in religion and philosophy had been uttered when the Hindu sages proclaimed, '*Tat tvam asi*' or 'That thou art', and that the efforts of subsequent philosophers and mystics had been confined to the restatement of that eternal truth in the language of their own times.

Eastern sages tell us that the sum total of the world's suffering and happiness always remains constant, though they may change positions. One thousand years ago Asia held high the torch of light and culture. Five hundred years ago the leadership changed hands and it was taken up by Europe. Now, again, it is changing position. Darkness seems to be settling over the once illumined countries of Europe.

Some of the great scientists of the nineteenth century gave a mechanistic interpretation of the universe and thought that there was no purpose behind evolution or the cosmic process. Lifeless particles of matter, operated by non-intelligent force or energy, created the various objects of the world. A Christ or an Alexander, a Beethoven or a gangster, a Plato or a common man, were only chance productions of atoms by the action and reaction of energy. To try to find out a purpose or goal of evolution was wishful thinking. It was a projection of our pet fancies. If that is so, then life is meaningless, and so also is all human effort. If everything passes away, leaving nothing behind, if the universe itself will one day explode and disappear into a vast nothingness, then all our talk of culture, philosophy, science, and civilization is no more meaningful and significant than the braying of a donkey, and the Creator, if there be any, is the most cruel jester.

Yet the professed goal of science is the discovery of truth; of ethics, happiness; of aesthetics, beauty; and of religion, life everlasting. The actions of thoughtful men everywhere are characterized by the desire to promote brotherhood, fellowship, freedom, and the all-round happiness of all. Without such incentives life remains meaningless. The contemplation of these ideals and the striving to realize them, distinguish rational men from animals who are guided by instinct.

Frequent wars and other manifestations of man's greed, passion, selfishness, and cruelty make one feel that the average man of today is no nearer to the realization of high ideals than his forbears of three thousand years ago. The sum total of good and evil seems to remain a fixed quantity; so also the sum total of happiness and unhappiness. Evil has aptly been compared to chronic rheumatism, which only shifts its position in a patient's body, but never leaves the victim.

Plato often spoke of an ideal world, in contrast to this sense-perceived one, which he described as a world of shadows. He gave the vivid illustration of a cave in which a man is seated with his back to the door. His hands, feet, and the rest of his body are firmly fastened with chains, and he cannot move even in the slightest manner. A fire burns behind him outside the cave. The prisoner is constrained to keep looking ahead at a blank wall on which constantly flit the shadows cast by moving objects on the high-road passing by his subterranean room. He sees only the shadows, and never the real objects on the road. This is his fate from birth to death. Naturally he regards shadows alone to be real and never suspects the existence of the real things. It is the only world he lives in, and he has no way of knowing of the existence of any other world as long as he remains shackled to his seat and cannot turn around. Plato pointed out that our life on earth may be compared to that of the man imprisoned in the cave. The beauty, peace, freedom, love, happiness, and truth that we cherish in this phenomenal world are only so many shadows. We are shackled to the earth by the chains of ignorance. We are constrained to look only in one direction. The true counterparts of these shadows exist only in an ideal world which remains unknown to us as long as we dwell enchained in the cave. They can be realized in that ideal world alone.

Christ preached the kingdom of heaven, which alone is the abode of true happiness, peace, and blessedness. He contrasted this kingdom with the kingdom of Rome, the only kingdom that seemed real to the people of that time. He further pointed out that the kingdom of heaven is within every man. He was as sure of its existence as we are of our sense-perceived world.

The Hindu philosophers speak of Satchidânanda as the goal of human life. But that Absolute Reality, Knowledge, and Bliss cannot be related to our universe of time, space, and causation.

It is a supra-conscious experience attainable by man while living in a physical body. The Upanishads say that if a man knows this Reality here in this life, then alone does he abide in the saving Truth. Otherwise there awaits him great destruction. Further, we learn from the Upanishads that whatever is here is there also, and whatever is there is here also. He who sees a difference between here and there goes from death to death. The Hindu philosopher emphatically declares that the Ultimate Reality, which is of the nature of peace, blessedness, and infinity, is the inmost essence of man and can be attained through a mind endowed with self-control and contemplation. The calm soul is blessed with the supersensuous vision of this Reality.

In spite of all our frustrations and disappointments, we refuse to give up these ideals. They form an integral part of our very life and being. Is the realization of these ideals a mere speculation, or can it be verified by direct experience? Has the attainment of perfect peace, freedom, and blessedness been realized in actual life?

In the course of evolution, a few souls, it seems, have gone ahead of the rest of humanity. They seem to have attained the goal of evolution. They are our elder brothers and our pathfinders. Through their lives and actions they have demonstrated the realization of truth and the possession of life everlasting. They have reached the goal which we, too, shall certainly reach as the consummation of our evolution.

When men attain the state of perfection, they see this world in quite a different light through their new eye of wisdom. Compared to these great souls, we are like caterpillars, ugly in appearance, crawling on the earth, nibbling at the leaf, and leading a drab and uninteresting life. And they are the butterflies, radiant with all the colours of the rainbow, lighting on the flowers and sipping honey. We are like timid fledglings living in the dark prison of the nest and fed from the mouth of the mother bird. These blessed souls are like full-grown eagles, joyous and free, and challenging with their strong wings the roof of heaven. They are moths that fly in the light, whereas we still flutter in darkness.

They form the vanguard of evolution. They have blazed trails for us. Their lives are pointers to the rest of mankind as to its destination. To us, weary and confused travellers, they shine like the pillar of smoke by day and the column of fire by night. Theirs is the steady light of the pole-star, and if we follow in their footsteps we shall never become disoriented. We learn from their experience that freedom, blessedness, and immortality are self-evident truths and the common heritage of man.

Their lives are the actual demonstration of religion. In their steep ascent through the strait and narrow path they leave behind all the unnecessary burdens of worldly desires and possessions. In order to walk through the rarefied air of high altitudes, they strip themselves of all unnecessary things and carry with them only their naked souls. Their lives illustrate the reality of God and the illusoriness of the world.

These souls, rare though they are, have been born in all countries and societies. They have been nourished by all religions. No faith or society can lay exclusive claim to them. The very nature of their transcendental experience lifts them above the forms and rituals of organized religions. They have been worshipped from time out of mind as Prophets, Saviours, Incarnations, and God-men. Whenever virtue declines and wickedness rules society, we see the advent of such a soul, whom God uses as His instrument for the vindication of truth and the chastisement of unrighteousness.

Krishna, Buddha, Moses, Christ, and Mohammed—to mention only a few of them—have been recognized as representing the goal of man's evolutionary process. Though living far apart from

one another in time and space, they have prescribed in essential matters the same disciplines for the unfoldment of man's higher life. They bear a striking family resemblance. Having realized for themselves peace and blessedness, they have shown us the way to the realization of these ideals. History teaches us that the society which produces such souls enriches human culture and possesses an enduring value. But the society that is not conducive to the birth of such souls perishes.

More than any other country, India has given birth to these pillars of spiritual culture. The firmament of India has always been lighted by such luminous orbs. The latest one to vindicate India's time-honoured spiritual heritage was born slightly over a hundred years ago. Within fifty years of his passing away, his influence has spread to all the civilized countries of the world, and his life has become a source of inspiration to tens of thousands outside the land of his birth. The spiritual culture of India for the last three thousand years has been incarnated through him, and the spiritual aspiration of the three hundred millions of Hindus has found expression through his experiences and words. Shri Ramakrishna is indeed the Saviour of our time and serves as the beacon light for the next onward movement of man's evolution.

WHAT CAN VEDANTA MEAN TO AMERICANS ?*

By Denver Lindley

The subject of this talk is: 'What can Vedanta mean to Americans?' And the answer I propose to give is that Vedanta can help us to understand, increasingly, the meaning of life. I should like to begin by considering what we mean by 'the meaning of life'. It is not something that can be expressed in a sentence or wrapped up neatly in a formula. It is and must be, as the teachers of Vedanta have always insisted, something learned through first-hand experience. It has to be realized. And so the search for meaning must begin as a process of training for the individual.

Let us be quite clear about this. What we can know depends on what we are. This can be seen easily enough in the case of creatures more limited than we are. For instance, it is no good discussing a sunset with an oyster. There are no sunsets in an oyster's world. It is no good, really, discussing a sunset with a dog. A dog, as Pavlov's experiments proved, cannot see colours. He lives in a world of blacks and whites and greys, and so your enthusiasm for the beauties of Nature would simply seem foolish to him. All this we can understand without difficulty; but it is hard for us to believe that *we* may suffer from similar limitations. If, in this world in which there is so much suffering and evil and in which the future looks so dark, we find persons who retain their serenity and even cheerfulness, we leap to the conclusion that they can do so only by ignoring facts that are clear to us. It does not easily occur to us that they may be in contact with a force of such transcendent loving-kindness that in it all suffering is neutralized and all evil underspanned. Just as the dog might say to us, 'Where is this thing you call colour? I don't see it,' we are tempted to say, 'Where is this force? I have eyes, and I don't see it.'

And so, if we are interested in meaning, Vedanta directs us to look first at ourselves, to begin our search with our own minute-to-minute experience. Let me use a figure of speech. And I should

* Digest of a talk given at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York.

like to point out parenthetically why figures of speech are so important when we are dealing with ultimates. A figure of speech is a sort of warning sign: it advertises the fact that what is said must not be taken literally. If one uses abstract philosophical language, there is the temptation to believe that what is said may be precisely accurate. But anything that we can say about ultimates is not more than an approximation. And so all statements, all philosophies, all religious creeds are only figures of speech in disguise. To get back to our figure of speech, this attempt is like an enormously complex chess game. At first we are not sure that the game has any rules. The moves we make are random moves and we play lethargically and inattentively. We fail to see the connection between what we do and what happens in and to us. Later, when our play has become more apt and rapid, we gain an understanding of some aspect of the rules (what we have come to call the moral law) and we think that now we can easily win. But as the play continues and we find each move of ours matched by the perfect counter-move, we realize that winning is not the sense or point of this game. The point, we begin dimly to perceive, is growth. And later still, we come to realize that the enormous and infinitely patient intelligence opposite us has our development at heart, that the Living Law is a law of love.

This fact was very beautifully expressed by Swami Turiyananda when he said that in spiritual development there is a kind of watershed or dividing line, and until one reaches that line, everything seems to happen by law; after one has passed it, everything is seen to have happened through Grace—and the two things are the same. Interestingly enough, Arthur Eddington expressed the same thought. He said that he believed that the era of natural law might be a short one. This statement puzzled many people. It need not have. Eddington did not mean that natural law would turn out to be invalid; he simply meant that the total process would in time be seen to be teleological—that is, purposive in all its aspects.

If, then, we are subject to a law of growth, what practical consequences can we draw for our own behaviour? The first obvious one is that making ourselves comfortable is not the point of life, nor can we afford to devote our best energies to it. The second point is that we cannot escape the consequences of the game by refusing to play. If it is our move and we do nothing, just as in a chess game, the hands of the clock move on, and at the end of the allotted period we are assumed to have played. The game goes on, but our position is compromised.

There is another and most important implication of this discovery. Our present experience is not all; it is a cross-section of a far larger reality, which we as yet are unable to perceive. In the words of Heraclitus: 'Here we are as in an egg.'

Meaning, we may be sure, can be found if we really want to find it. The universe will precisely meet our powers of intelligent interest—and this is true whether the quality of mind brought to bear be that of a Newton or that of the village idiot. But it is important for us to pause and inquire how much meaning we want and how much we can stand. Somewhere beneath the conscious level we know that the apprehension of meaning spells the end of irresponsibility and we spend much time and ingenuity in blinding ourselves to meaning and in fleeing from it. We cannot have it both ways: we cannot sedulously disregard significance nine-tenths of the time and then have it available on those occasions when we need reassurance, though this in fact is what we should like to do.

We live in a world in which there is no doubt, no chance, no accident. The full meaning of this is more than staggering, it is unbearable to creatures at our level. The pressure of full meaning is far more than we could

stand. Only by patient training can we learn to apprehend the partial insights that are open to us. But of this we may be assured: there is no shortage of meaning—and no ending to it.

Vedanta does not demand that anyone should begin with a full set of beliefs or a confession of faith. If you come saying, 'I don't believe in God,' or if you say, as most of us have done at one time or another, 'I don't know whether God exists,' no one will shake his head at you. The teacher of Vedanta will say, 'This is something you must find out for yourself. The only thing that matters is that you should be interested in finding out.' Allow me to use another figure of speech. We are like children born in an inland town. We have never seen the ocean. Our parents, perhaps, have never seen the ocean. In this town there is argument and dispute as to whether such a thing as the ocean exists. Some say that the stream that flows through the town empties eventually into the ocean. Others say that it runs out into the desert and disappears into the ground. And those who occasionally come to the town, those who have seen the ocean with their own eyes, have the strangeness of far places about them, and we do not know whether to believe what they say. But these travellers do not ask us to accept their word alone. They say that we, too, can see the ocean if we choose. It is, they report, a long and arduous journey. It will require all the strength we have—all we have, but no more than that. And they say, if we make the journey resolutely, before we come in sight of the ocean, we shall encounter many proofs of its existence. The river will move beneath us in response to the ocean tides. Salt air will come to our nostrils, and we shall hear the distant thunder of the surf.

'Very well,' we may say, 'this interests me. I am willing to take the first step or two and see how it goes. But I need help. Where can I find it?' And here, if what we say is true, if we really want help, we learn an important part of the rules of the game—that there is a spiritual law of supply and demand. It works with unfailing, mathematical precision. Demand, a genuine demand for help, whether outwardly expressed or not, is always met. We may not recognize or like the answer when it comes, but come it will. We may expect a sage to knock at our door, whereas help may be offered by Samuel Hall, the man who lives next door. And we say, 'Surely I deserved a more distinguished messenger than this.' Needless to say, the thing to do is to accept the help and see what happens then. For to the degree to which we are able to avail ourselves of assistance when it is offered, to just that degree more help will be given.

Now all this that we have been talking about is what is commonly and properly known as a philosophy of life, and one may ask, 'Why not choose a philosophy of life from our own Western tradition? Then if it needs additional illustration, turn if you like to the East for ancillary support.' The answer to this question is that no such comprehensive philosophy of life can be found at present in the West. Philosophy, in the academic meaning of the word, abdicated after Aristotle. It has become more and more divorced from life—and the philosophy that is not constantly illustrated in the lives of its followers is valueless. More and more, academic philosophy has become doubtful of itself. It is obsessed with epistemology—the problem of knowledge. It stands in a corner wringing its hands and saying, 'I can never know reality.' Vedanta has never suffered from this failure of nerve. Its answer has always been: 'Get rid of the self that cannot know Reality; your true Self can know Reality because it *is* Reality.'

The churches have been scarcely more helpful. And here I must emphasize that I am speaking simply for myself. An Eastern Vadantist with his 'beautiful

charity and perfect courtesy towards our Western institutions, would not say this. But I have been brought up in the Christian tradition and so probably have most of you, and we know its limitations. On one hand, the attitude of most churches is cringing. They say, 'Give us your material support and a few minutes of your time on an occasional Sunday, and we will make no further demands on your busy and important lives.' This is neither religion nor philosophy. I hesitate to say what it is. On the other hand, the church in which spiritual training is still a living tradition, though a feeble one, makes such demands upon the credulity of its members that it is becoming increasingly difficult for intelligent persons to belong to it.

Let us look more closely at our terms. The statement of meaning that we are now approaching is not *a* philosophy of life, it is *the* philosophy of life. It is what has been called the *Philosophia Perennis*, the Eternal Doctrine. It is important to realize that this doctrine is called 'eternal' not because it is very old, but because it may be and is being constantly rediscovered. Statements of it are to be found in every age and among many nations. First, and perhaps most clearly, in Vedanta, then in the Tao Teh Ching in China, the Platonic Dialogues, the Book of St. John, Plotinus, Dionysius the Areopagite, the Persian Sufis, and the Medieval and modern mystics, East and West.

This Eternal Doctrine can be known in its pure form only in the act of contemplation. Formulation of it by the intellect is at best a pale indication of one of its aspects. For purposes of reference, however, I shall give a simple formulation, with the warning that it bears somewhat the same relation to the *Philosophia Perennis* itself that an X-ray photograph bears to a living being:

1. There is a divine ground in which the phenomenal world inheres and without which this world of names and forms would not exist.
2. It is possible to know this divine ground, not simply through hearsay and conjecture, but directly.
3. There are two aspects of man's nature: one is transient, not wholly real; through the other, man participates in the eternal ground.
4. The purpose of life is to achieve identification with the eternal aspect of one's nature—thus realizing what is called in the East liberation and enlightenment and in the West the unitive knowledge of God.

To some, this Eternal Doctrine seems the hope of the world. It is highly unlikely that any of the established religions can gain acceptance by people everywhere. The obstacles are too great. But anyone who has glimpsed the *Philosophia Perennis* within the framework of any religion will realize kinship with those who have seen it within the framework of any other.

Most people, but not all, find they need in addition to this simple statement, this 'minimum working hypothesis' as Aldous Huxley has called it, a more complete cosmology, a more detailed frame of reference. This really serves as a sort of master map which will show just how our special interests and experiences are related to one another. If it is any good, this map will have a place for everything. If you have a special interest in embroidery or gardening or non-Euclidian geometry, or a special affection for your husband or son or humanity, you can take this to your master map and see just how the special interest can be related to all other interests. Such a master map or frame of reference is supplied by the Vedantic cosmology.

It gives a clear and comprehensive picture of the majestic drama in which each of us has a part to play. Nor are our parts those of supernumeraries. Each is vital to the whole. By how much you go forward or regress, by just so much does the universal scheme

advance or halt. There is no private salvation.

We can, however, each one of us, win assurance in this life. We can, if we choose, know Reality—the timeless, the eternal. We can do this because Reality lies within us as well as without. The Âtman is Brahman. It is possible to reach the point at which the spirit, rising from its base of immanence to its apex of transcendence, becomes a clear flame.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE PRACTICAL REASON ACCORDING TO THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

By Prof. S. N. L. Shrivastava, M.A.

In the second chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita we read that Bhagavan Shri Krishna, after having spoken to Arjuna the quintessence of the metaphysical knowledge (*sânkhya*), proceeds to teach him the Yoga of the Intelligent Will (*buddhi-yoga*). From the *Critique of the Pure Reason*, we may say, adopting the Kantian phraseology, he proceeds to discourse on the *Critique of the Practical Reason*. Spiritual life is not simply the intellectual assimilation of ideas, but a direction or habit of the Will, a Discipline of the Practical Reason.

From the fortieth verse onwards in the second chapter of the Gita, Shri Krishna outlines the cardinal principles or 'imperatives' of his Critique of the Practical Reason. The following are the three most important imperatives :

(1) The very first thing that Shri Krishna emphasizes is to make oneself strong in the consciousness that 'no effort in spiritual life is ever lost, nor will it ever bring an undesired result. Even if one's spiritual effort is not considerable, it will not be without significance and will save him from much disaster.' Without such a strong conviction, nobody could ever make, or would ever have the inclination to make, any spiritual progress. When life holds all around the spectacle of right worsted and wrong triumphant, of the cruel happy and the righteous unhappy, it needs a heroic heart to have the robust faith

> that somehow good
> shall be the final goal of ill.

Shri Krishna realizes the danger of 'the good Will' being paralysed by the bleak pessimism which the seemingly adverse circumstances of life are ever apt to engender in man. Once the 'good will' is paralysed, the prospects of the ascent to a higher life are marred for ever. The first cardinal principle in Shri Krishna's Critique of the Practical Reason is to strengthen the Will always by the thought

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥*

If the essence of the above principle be expressed in a somewhat Kantianized language, it would take some such form as this : *Will always the right and the good, so that the maxim of thy actions shall always be thy unassailable conviction that a good deed is never lost, but remains a permanent spiritual gain.*

(2) The second principle of discipline is the practice of keeping the Will always one-pointed, riveted to the pure spiritual Ideal alone, and not allow it to be 'many-branched'. Shri Krishna exhorts us to save ourselves from the subtle seductions of the several false or pseudo-spiritual ideals, such as (*a*) the tendency to be too much scripture-minded or Veda-minded as the Gita puts

* The translation is given above, within quotations, under (1).—Ed., P.B.

it; (*b*) the desire for heaven; and (*c*) the longing for enjoyment and love of power. Such ideals are antagonistic to the true spiritual ideal. The full import of Shri Krishna's condemnation of the 'Vedist pedant' (*veda-vâda-ratah*) is, I believe, oftener missed than grasped by the readers of the Bhagavad-Gita. None the less, it is of such an importance that in speaking about the seductive distractions, Shri Krishna mentions it first. Shri Ramakrishna sought to convey the same idea when he said that the *granthas* (books) are *granthis* (knots). 'Cease from an inordinate desire of knowing,' says St. Thomas a Kempis, 'for therein is much distraction and deceipt.' The need for guarding against the 'distractions' of unduly occupying oneself with scripture-learning and scriptural text-torturing has been emphasized by all teachers of the spiritual path, and Shri Krishna is no exception. Says he, 'It is only when thy scripture-tossed mind (*shruti-vipratipannâ buddhih*) tranquillizes and gets immovably fixed in *samâdhi* that thou can'st attain Yoga' (Gita, II. 53). How we forget that the scripture was made for man, not man for the scripture! The knowledge of the Vedas, says Shri Krishna, pertains to the realm of the three *gunas*, but the Goal of the spiritual aspirant is to go beyond this realm. 'To the wise man of Self-realization, the whole bulk of the Vedas is of as little significance as a small pool of water is to a region filled with water all around' (Gita, II. 46). Not a few are there in whose minds the knowledge of the Vedas creates a subtle pride in their spiritual superiority. The self-complacent religiosity of these persons is most pitiable.

The desire for heaven and the desire for power and self are other distractions of the mind which detract men from the path of true spirituality.

Shri Krishna's second maxim of the Practical Reason may thus be expressed: *Will always and solely the realization of the Atman, and be not distracted by the desire for pleasures, heavenly or earthly.*

(3) The third principle of *buddhi-yoga* is action without the desire of the fruit thereof, action in the spirit of dedication to God. This is the ideal of *nishkâma karma*, the most notable doctrine of the Bhagavad-Gita. To dedicate all one's actions to God is tantamount to dedicating one's entire life to Him and is the high-water mark of a consecrated life. Nothing for personal gain, everything as an offering unto Him. Thus can one have 'inaction in action'. Thus can one act and not be bound by the consequences of the act. Here is the maxim in Shri Krishna's own words: '*Let not the fruit of action be thy motive, nor be thou to inaction attached. Perform action, O Dhananjaya, dwelling in union with the Divine, renouncing attachments, and balanced evenly in success and failure*' (Gita, II. 47-48).

Shri Krishna exhorts us here to avoid the two extremes, the one of attachment to inactivity and the other of action with the motive of a personal gain. Inactivity is a moral and a spiritual failure inasmuch as it means non-participation in and non-furtherance of the cosmic plan of the Creator; action motived by personal gain is foredoomed to failure and frustration, for the world-process is designed to work out the cosmic plan and purpose of the Divine.

Unto His measure moveth the whole.

The individual is only the *nimitta-mâtram*. No one in this world could ever do great things or rise to great heights by making personal gain the motive of one's actions. The best minds only care to do the best things in the best manner they can. Bosanquet has rightly observed:

What a man really cares about—so it seems to me—may be described as making the most of the trust he has received. He does not value himself as a detached and purely self-identical subject. He values himself as the inheritor of the gifts and surroundings which are focussed in him, and which it is his business to raise to their highest power. The attitude of a true noble, one in whom *noble-*

sse oblige is a simple example of what *mutatis mutandis* all men feel. The man is a representative, a trustee for the world, of certain powers and circumstances. And this cannot fail to be so. For suffering and privation are also opportunities. The question for him is how much he can make of them. This is the simple and primary point of view, and also, in the main, the true and fundamental one. It is not the bare personality or the separate destiny that occupies a healthy mind. It is the thing to be done, known, and felt ; in a word, the completeness of experience, his contribution to it, and his participation in it.[1]

It is often objected that the ideal of 'desireless action is an impossible and impractical ideal, for it is not possible in the nature of things to act without any desire whatsoever. Now, what the Gita insists upon is that *desire for personal gain* should not be the motive of our actions. It should be substituted by the 'desire for the welfare of the community' (*chikirshur lokasangraham*). It is the lower egoistic desires which have to be abandoned, not the higher benevolent ones. All right activity is marked by unselfishness and self-abnegation. It is a sad mistake to think, as many people do, that mere activism, mere 'getting on in the world' as they say, is Karma-Yoga. *Karma* it is, but not *Karma-Yoga.* The Gita is not an exponent of mere activism as such, but of self-abnegating and consecrated activism (*yogasthah kuru karmâni*). The Gita is primarily and essentially a *Yoga-shâstra*, a Gospel which teaches union with the Divine; and its teachings are of use only to those who are serious about this spiritual purpose in life. The whole philosophy of action of the Bhagavad-Gita has meaning and significance only for him whose fundamental aim in life is God-realization, whether he is a householder or a *sannyâsin*. Some students of the Gita think that its teachings do not permit anyone to become a *sannyâsin* and insist on everybody remaining in the world. Such an inference, however, is hardly warranted by the texts of the Gita. All that the Gita says is that the essence of real *sannyâsa* is not mere *karma-sannyâsa* or mere cessation of activity but *karma-phala-tyâga* or inwardly abandoning the desire for the fruits of actions. This is a lesson as much for the *sannyâsin* as for the householder. Here is no injunction against the order of *sannyâsa* as such. The insistence of the Gita on activity for *loka-sangraha* is also as much binding on the *sannyâsin* as on the householder. History bears witness to the fact that every great *sannyâsin* has done this. Whether one should become a *sannyâsin* or a householder depends on what he is better fitted to be to the maximum advantage to himself and to humanity. 'Each is great in his own place,' as Swami Vivekananda said. The whole question of what one has to be and one has to do must be viewed from the standpoint of one's *swadharma*. *Swadharma* is the central category in the ethics of the Bhagavad-Gita. Work becomes worship and action a consecration when one engages himself in performing his *swadharma* with no other consideration but this that it is his *swadharma* which he is commissioned by the Divine to perform for Him and for humanity, regardless of all consequences to himself. This is the cardinal principle of the Gita's philosophy of action. The important question, then, is, What is one's *swadharma*? *Swadharma* is one's supreme vocation in life determined by one's dispositional make-up (*swabhâva-niyatam karma*) and congenital endowments. It is action in the line of one's individual genius, so to say. To pursue one's *swadharma* selflessly and as an offering unto God and humanity is the *Karma-Yogic* path of union with the Divine.

[1] *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 21.

DEMOCRACY IN CRISIS

By Pran Nath Bhatnagar, M.A.

Democracy is today faced with the gravest of crises it has ever known. Both as a form of Government and as a method of ordering society, democracy is challenged by alternatives which seem to threaten its very existence as a political and social creed. The crisis is thus twofold. As a form of Government it has to meet the growing menace of dictatorship, and as a method of ordering society it has to repel the furious onslaughts of communism. In the pages that follow an attempt is made to study the problem of democracy vis-a-vis dictatorship and communism.

Parliamentary democracy of the individualistic sort with its universal franchises was established in Europe soon after the first World War. But some ten years after in south-eastern Europe, in Italy, and Germany and throughout the progressively Europeanized world—in Japan and China, in Persia and Turkey, and in most of Latin America, dictatorship became the political order of the day. Dictatorship might be communistic as in the Russian Union of the Soviet Republics, or be nominally corporate as in Italy and Germany; but in either case it is clearly not democratic in the conventional meaning of the word. It is more akin to the Cæsarism of the ancient Roman Empire, or to the benevolent despotism which preceded the advent of political democracy. But it is more extensive and efficient than any of these earlier precedents. Unlike these, it has never associated itself with titled aristocracy and only exceptionally with royalty. Dictatorship is established in our own day by men of low origin, men who are adepts at swaying the multitude emotionally and at organizing fanatically devoted bands of supporters. Such a band by espousing a popular cause and employing violence acquires a privileged position in the State and then uses it to monopolize all the latest machinery for the manufacture of public opinion and thus ensuring a continuing pseudo-democratic acquiescence of the masses, civilian and military, for the actions of the dictator. All Government is in a way a subtle combination of the forces of fear and love. What the dictators do is that they increase the dynamics of this process. It is true that a spirit of democracy may still be manifest, but it is embodied in a disciplined minority party and not in the majority of free individuals. Thus it differs radically from the form of democracy which had been developed in the nineteenth century and which was universally adopted at the end of the first World War.

Everywhere the dictators have put suffrage on a class and occupational basis. Popular voting has been limited to occasional plebiscites as in Germany. Parliaments have been done away with and the broadened governmental powers have been assumed and arbitrarily exercised by one man and one party. That reaction should ensue so widely and so suddenly was indeed surprising. It seems that individualistic democracy has been but an unsuccessful attempt in the political history of mankind. The disillusionment and distrust in the principles and ideals which had characterized the enlightenment of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have been complete. Indeed, the very existence of political democracy as a political ideology is at stake. The phenomenal rise of dictatorship within ten years is nothing short of a revolution. One wonders as to how man's belief in his cultural inheritance came to be

shaken in so short a time. What are after all the causes of this somersault?

Individualism which had been the keynote of the enlightenment for two centuries was now eclipsed by both material developments and changing habits of mind. With the growth of industrialization and the multiplication of big machines, the individual lost his separate entity. He became a mere cog in mechanized agriculture or industry, performing a minor function in mass production. In his daily life he increasingly worked and lived and travelled about with crowds of fellows. Mass education and mass journalism and mass sport shaped and determined his mental make-up. Again being a social animal the individual could not resist the influence of social pressure and propaganda. And propaganda in the new age was directed towards enlisting as many individuals as possible in some sort of mass movement, socialistic or materialistic or both. The World War itself was a great factor in sounding the death-knell of individualism. It was a mass war far more than any previous war. It was a war which was won not by the genius of any single general but by superior production and co-ordination of military machines and popular propaganda. The World War singularly demonstrated the progress of industrialization, and shook the faith of the new age in the belief that technology would supplement and even augment the individualism of the enlightened.

Apart from the passing of individualism the first World War left a world economically and socially disintegrated. The new democracies which sprang up with the termination of hostilities, were handicapped by social and economic issues of the utmost gravity. And for the solution of these problems the new democracies had to rely upon parliaments whose members were not only inexperienced in the practical conduct of public affairs but were more often than not split up among mutually antagonistic political parties owing allegiance to programmes swinging from extreme feudalism to extreme socialism. Their failure to adapt democratic political procedure to new conditions convinced them that democratic principles involved anarchy incompatible with the vigorous organization required by the State. With this has grown a conviction that these principles destroy the unity of the State and the energy needed for action is dissipated in futile discussion. They declare that parliaments are overwhelmed with work so that rapidity of action is impossible for them. The average man is too incompetent and uninterested in the issues which face the world today, to have an effective opinion about them; whereas the technicality of modern problems means Government by the expert, and democratic methods are held to be irrelevant to his decisions. The failure of the new democracies may be due to the fact that they have not given political democracy a fair trial. It may also be due to differences in racial temperament and genius. Small wonder that enthusiasm for democratic Government waned so quickly and was succeeded by enthusiasm for some kind of strong-man rules. The protagonists of democracy believe that ultimately political democracy will prevail. Their sincere belief is that man cannot brook interference and restraints on his liberty for long, and sooner or later he will rise in revolt against this curtailment of his freedom. It might be that political democracy wins the day in the long run, but at present reaction against it is in full swing.

The other danger that stares democracy in the face is from communism, which is nothing more than extreme socialism. Communism means the dictatorship of the proletariat and the seizure and control of the means of production and distribution by the State in the interests of the masses. Democracy to the communists is an ideal incapable of realization until the power of property is overthrown. The ideal of democracy on the other hand, implies

private gain. Some hold that democracy and socialism are identical. This is rather true. Democracy is compatible with socialism in all its forms except those which like the communistic totally eclipse the individual by denying his self-regarding impulse and his desire to possess something of his own. In fact, if democracy is to remain and mean anything, individualism must survive.

The fact that modern democracy is confronted with the problem of property above all else is no cause for surprise. The problem is not merely a demand for their rights on the part of the unfavoured classes who at long last have become suddenly aware of their deprivation and suffering. It is not so simple as that. The crux of the problem is that the unfavoured classes have come to hold that democracy means the control by the middle classes of the population. How has this come about?

The middle classes were brought into power by the Industrial Revolution. They evolved a new form of State organization—capitalist democracy—most suited to afford them security in their new position. The basis of the industrial system, thus established, was the liberty of contract, a doctrine which could not be upheld for long. The capitalist held the reins of economic power in his hands, while the poor worker had nothing to fall back upon. On the other hand the capitalist had no idea of any obligation to those who worked for him. He was too much concerned with the attainment of his own profit. In his adherence to it he looked upon the State as the guardian of his interests and even maintained that any interference on its part would destroy civic rights.

The achievements of democratic Government during the nineteenth century were the grant of religious freedom and the extension of political equality. Yet these in no way provided a clue to the solution of the major social and economic issues, the results of purblind industrialism. The masses still remained poor, and power remained in the hands of a few rich men. The extension of the franchise, however, gave rise to a movement towards social and economic equality, a movement which received great impetus by the spread of doctrines like that of Karl Marx, the organization of the working classes into trade unions, and the anxiety of the political parties to enlist the goodwill of the worker who by virtue of his newly acquired right to vote was fast becoming a factor to be reckoned with in politics. In the early part of the twentieth century the fulfilment of the economic wants of the worker by the State was the central theme of debate. The minimum wage, the regulation of hours of work, legislations about health, unemployment, education, housing, and public utilities all represented the efforts of the State in this direction. But these efforts in no way gave equality to the worker, but only mitigated the worst consequences of unhampered industrialism. At best these efforts may be called the concessions made by capitalist democracy to the worker without in any way compromising its own economic supremacy.

The dilemma of parliamentary democracy was due to the fact that the class which dominated it could not meet the demands made upon it. The germs of future trouble were sown when capitalist democracy offered a share in political authority to all citizens on the assumption that equality involved in the democratic ideal did not mean economic equality. But this assumption was altogether untenable. The demand for equality in the economic sphere was a logical outcome of universal suffrage. The socialist creed thus grew out of democratic theory. The demand for economic equality struck at the roots of capitalist democracy, in that it meant the denial of the right of private profit, which the capitalist, who dominated it, was in no mood to forgo. The new class, the proletariat, sought to re-

organize the State in its own interests. In fact, the rise of a new class to political power meant social revolution and a re-orientation of economic power. This phase of the crisis is indeed very grave, because it strikes at the very foundations of democratic theory. A new society is emerging out of the confines of the old; but it finds the bounds of the old too tight to admit of easy outlet.

In the establishment of the communist regime in Russia the new class has secured a signal victory against representative democracy. Indeed the theory of the Russian experiment is the most complete challenge to the democratic principle. The Russian experiment has, however, produced its antithesis in various forms, the most striking of which is the fascist dictatorship in Italy. The underlying principle of fascism is the defence of the power of the middle classes against the onslaughts of the masses. It is the outcome of the realization that the trend of democracy is to fasten an increasingly heavy burden on the rich and the well-to-do. Thus the dictatorship it establishes is a deliberate attempt to mitigate this condition. There are, however, some who look upon dictatorship as the last resort of capitalism in its fight against communism.

In the Western democracies—in England and France—socialist legislation has been enacted, a fact which clearly shows that, despite his obsession for profit-making motive, the capitalist is fully alive to the gravity and magnitude of the attack from this quarter. The success of communism in the Western democracies and the dictatorship, in fact, in all capitalist countries would depend upon the wholesale conversion of the masses to the new ideology. It would depend upon a complete change of heart. And the Russian experiment is still only twenty years old while capitalist democracy has a long tradition of remarkable achievements at its back. Besides, communism is but a novel experiment and human nature is especially chary of novelties and is essentially conservative. Still, in spite of its infancy, the Russian experiment has given a new momentum to the agitation for social and economic equality not only in the Western democracies but also all over the world.

Whether democracy will emerge triumphant from the crisis is hard to say. The reason is not far to seek. The general temper of the world is one of profound distrust. The faith of the present age in the beliefs and standards of the nineteenth century has been completely shaken. Man's social and political and cultural ideas are in the melting pot. Disillusionment is discernible in art, literature, science, and religion. It does not end there. In the post-war period the contagion has spread to political and social spheres. In the political sphere, there is a strong reaction against parliamentary democracy as a form of Government. In the social sphere, an intermittent fight is going on between communism and capitalism. In Russia communism seems to be entrenched for ever and its success there has considerably strengthened communistic forces all over the world. In Germany and Austria communism failed after a precarious existence. Nationalist success in Spain has meant another defeat for it. Besides, the awakening of the democracies to the danger from communism is making the possibilities of a communistic revolution, as visualized by Karl Marx, remoter and remoter. As a result of the enactment of socialist legislation, the lot of the worker has now greatly improved; he is better fed and better housed than in Marx's time.

At present the deadliest war in the whole of human history is being fought out with the professed aim of making the world safe for democracy. But will force really decide an issue which lies in the world of the spirit, a conflict which is one of two opposite ways of living, a crisis which, in the ultimate

analysis, resolves into a struggle—virtual tug-of-war—between exaggerated individualism and an equally exaggerated cult of socialism? Annihilation and destruction threaten the human species from both sides. Over-emphasis on either is bound to lead to disaster, especially when it has been demonstrated that the democratic ideas and values of advancing industrialism have failed to cure the ills of the modern world. The solution of the human situation thus demands a synthesis between these two antithetical ideas, a just *milieu*, a middle path between these two extremes, in fine, a review and a restatement of the relations of the individual vis-a-vis society and *vice versa;* for it is only in a new awareness of the inter-dependence of personality and community, of individuality and sociality that mankind can feel its way forward.

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA'S LIGHT

By Mrs. Earl H. Brewster

In May 1926 the sun blazed over the green lawns and trees where the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission were assembled at the Belur Math. The golden robes of Swamijis among white Brahmacharins moved over the lawns, among trees by the side of the swift river dotted with bright-sailed boats. White cows walked freely among the crowds assembled there, eating from anyone's hand. A spirit of joy and generosity reigned over the scene. Noble, dignified elders sat in state, around the abbot, Shivanandaji, dispensing courtesy and hospitality. Thousands were fed after *puja* at the temples of their teachers: Thâkur, Holy Mother (Ramakrishna's wife), Brahmananda, and Vivekananda. It was a living centre of good deeds, welcoming the needy. Among them moved savants and saints. M. who had recorded the words of Ramakrishna was there, his quiet reserve and direct knowledge were authority in themselves. In his white robes, with his long beard, his deep eyes of a teacher, he was a calm and benign figure.

The stars shining by night reflected in the river. People sat by its margin; Swamis whose lives had been spent in Himalayan solitude in research at Mayavati joined seekers from the West with quiet welcome, Virajananda among them; pilgrims who had wandered through Tibet, Akhandananda, among others, shared their experiences; teachers who had known wide travel, in other lands, Saradananda, and devotees joined the strangers.

On the roof, with the moon-light pouring down through the balmy night, young Swamis gathered with *esrâj* or *vinâ* singing *râgas* and hymns: the songs of Mira Bai, songs praising the Mother, the verses of Ram Prasad, hymns loved by Shri Ramakrishna. Their voices were young and sweet.

Pre-eminent among them was Miss Josephine MacLeod, a devoted friend of Vivekananda who with her sister, Mrs. Leggett, had been donor of many gifts. The generous spirit of Vivekananda descended on all those, who were touched by his love. It shone in calm splendour in Sister Christine and in the courageous strength of Sister Nivedita, years after her death.

The wide-reaching words of loving kindness are found among scholars patiently studying, translating, enriching life. The Madras Swamis have established schools that seem ideal, full of beauty, where those who thirst for knowledge may find it.

Out of one tiny coin the love in one Swami's heart has created the Ramakrishna Mission hospital in Benares whose good works are unending. Thus Ramakrishna's light shines on.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

Conversation with Swami Shivananda is a translation of a chapter of the Bengali book *Shivananda-vâni* . . . . Swami Nikhilananda is the President of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York and Mr. Denver Lindley is its Vice-president . . . . Prof. S. N. L. Shrivastava of Jubbulpore is already known to our readers . . . . M. Pran Nath Bhatnagar is a very welcome new contributor.

Higher Value of Science

Speaking to the members of the Science Association of a College in Madras, on the cultural value of science, Sir C. V. Raman made some very pertinent and thought-provoking observations. He regretted the misuse of scientific knowledge, and emphasized that science was essentially a cultural pursuit which could not be divorced from human values. He expressed his embarrassment at seeing scientific research being turned to the production of all types of wicked things at the present moment. We take the report as it appears in the *Hindu* :

> Sir C. V. Raman said that it was one of the fundamental duties of men of science all over the world to remember human values and refuse to allow their talents to be exploited for wicked purposes. . . . He personally believed that all the present troubles had arisen simply because of the 'misdirection of the fundamental activities of science'.

A more glaring instance of the unrighteous purposes for which science is used than the present war cannot be found. It is encouraging to find that a celebrated scientist has expressed himself against scientific cant and hypocrisy. Men of science joining hands with greedy politicians have made scientific knowledge responsible for a tremendous amount of human misery and suffering. But scientists are seldom willing to own this responsibility, and, instead, attempt to justify their action on grounds of wartime expediency and national self-defence.

> If science went on simply helping to multiply the weapons of destruction, men of science were to be held responsible. The time had come when thoughtful people should ask themselves as to what was going to happen to this world, and how they were going to pay more attention to cultural values.

Sir C. V. Raman has placed a higher ideal before the votaries of science. Scientists should change their 'exclusive' attitude. They should not remain content with technical research, but see that their discoveries are not misused. If the future generation of scientists would use their energy positively against the misapplication of science, that would bring back to science its lost glory and make the face of the earth brighter.

Science has done immense benefit to humanity. It has encouraged a spirit of modernism and a rational outlook in religion which has been shorn of fanatical orthodoxy. Science has a spiritual aspect too, in addition to its intellectual and material aspects. The well-known English scientist, Prof. A. V. Hill, observed that the pursuit of scientific knowledge, like the pursuit of virtue, should be regarded as an adventure of the human spirit. He also felt that science had a higher purpose in view than merely the achievement of material progress. The latter may be comparatively easier to attain, but is, no doubt, disastrous in its effect. Emphasis has to be laid on the spiritual aspect of science.

Less of Religion

That by reason of her religion, an excess of it, India had fallen upon a period of decline was the opinion expressed by the distinguished Chinese visitor to India, Dr. Lin Yutang, in an address

delivered at the Calcutta University. He is reported to have observed :

> Talking about religion, I think India has got too much of religion and can well afford to do with less of it. Religion is a part of your national genius. It is the one theme that runs uninterruptedly in Indian thought from the poets of the Rigveda and the teachings of the Buddha . . . . I admire these traits, yet I say India has got too much of religion and is suffering from an overdoze of spirituality.

We wish the learned Doctor had made his point more clear by showing in what respects India had suffered from an excess of religion and spirituality. He has, no doubt, expressed his considerable admiration for the religious life of Indians, and for their saints and seers. Those who think religion to be the cause of our weakness and suffering have always held a view of religion other than what it ought to be. Perhaps when the meaning of the word 'religion' is well defined, then we shall see that India has not suffered from but owes her survival to her religion. The popular notion of religion identifies it with local customs and social conventions. But these do not mean true religion which is the realization of the Divinity that is already in every man and woman. It is not right to revile religion associating it ignorantly with priestcraft, superstition, and dogmatism. Ethical theories, moral attitudes, and all that is good and great in human nature find their basis in the higher ideal of religion. A highly moralized society can alone produce the greatest saints. Holiness requires renunciation. Character is spirituality. Renunciation is not equivalent to laziness and defeatism; it is the voluntary determination to renounce the lower for the sake of the higher, the easy in favour of the difficult.

Ever since Western thought began to flow to India through Western thinkers and missionaries, our educated intelligentzia have persuaded themselves to assume a sneering attitude towards religion. Admirers of Russia have gone to the extent of thinking that that country has prospered because there is no religion there, and they prescribe a similar course for India. Communal bitterness and caste prejudices in India are invoked and exaggerated to show that religion is at fault. The point to be considered is what our friends are pleased to mean by religion. By all means an excess of a mere formal religion is bad. But no society has been known to suffer from an excess of virtue which is rare indeed. Christian nations are not said to have suffered from their religion, nor the Chinese from theirs, in spite of internecine wars. Is this because they have just the 'sufficient amount' of religion, while Indians suffer from 'too much' of it? In India social life is predominated by the religious outlook more than in other countries. This has been the saving factor of India, by keeping Indian civilization intact. Christian nations have little hesitation in subordinating their religion of self-denial and brotherly love to political or commercial expediency as the last War and the present one clearly show. It is clear that unless a nation is *saturated* with true spirituality, it is inclined, when the occasion comes, to throw it away in favour of self-interest.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE STARVING MILLIONS. BY SANTOSH KUMAR CHATTERJEE. *Published by Asoka Library, 15, Shyamacharan Dey Street, Calcutta. Pp. 94. Price Re. 1-8 As.*

The recent famine in Bengal, of unprecedented severity, was, unlike other famines, due to causes other than failure or destruction of crops. This has led many persons to investigate the real causes of famine, and the Central Government have appointed a Commission of Enquiry. The book under review is a thought-provoking study of the causes of famines in India in former times, and the main causes of the Bengal famine

of 1948. The author seeks to arrive at his conclusions in a dispassionate way taking his stand on facts. A historical survey of famine conditions, as they occurred at various times since the time of Warren Hastings, and the measures taken by the Government lends an appropriate background to the study of the Bengal situation. The course of events in the administrative life of the province which finally led to the tragedy in Bengal are clearly narrated. The author quotes extensively from the statements of Government spokesmen and other leading public men in order to show the inconsistency involved and the unfortunate way in which the food situation in the province was handled. He thinks that the immediate cause of the Bengal famine has been export of food from the province when the provincial stock was below its requirements. As a remedy against a recurrence of such a famine he suggests a revision of the land-system regarding settlement and the way of crop production. The author's work is commendable.

TO THE HEIGHTS. By Nolini Kanta Gupta. *Published by the Culture Publishers, 63, College Street (1st Floor), Calcutta. Pp. 58. Price Re. 1-8 As.*

This clearly printed book is a collection of what may be called 'prose poems', poetic thought arranged in prose order. There are forty-six such pieces, the *leit-motiv* of each bearing upon one or other aspect of the sincere devotee's relation to the Supreme. The author has penned his stirring thoughts in sparkling language expressing a variety of spiritual moods. These were written at different times as the dates given show, and two of them have been translated from the original Bengali. His views on religious experience are liberal, and he offers his spontaneous prayers to the Divinity in its different manifestations as the Supreme Lord of the Universe, and as Mother in Her 'Gracious' as well as 'Terrible' forms.

ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY STUDIES. *Published by Senate House, Allahabad.*

The book-let brought out by the Philosophy Section of the Allahabad University for the year 1948 contains a learned contribution by Prof. P. S. Naidu entitled 'On Regression'. It is a comparative and critical study of the theories of McDougall and Freud with the writer's original suggestions for the synthesis of the two.

The Education Section of the University has published a booklet containing a paper on 'Tests of Educability' by Dr. Bansi Dhar, treating of the modern methods of intelligence testing.

VISÂKHA-DATTA'S MUDRÂ-RÂKSHASA OR THE SIGNET-RING. *Translated into English by R. S. Pandit. Published by New Book Company, Bombay. Pp. xv+277.*

Mudrâ-Râkshasa, or the Signet-Ring is a drama of seven acts written and staged for the first time about 400 A.C., i.e., during the reign of the Imperial Guptas. Chanakya is its hero and he fills practically the whole canvas of the picture presented by it. It is a story of how, by superior cunning and diplomacy, Chanakya baffled all efforts of Rakshasa, minister of the Nandas, to overthrow Chandragupta, and eventually won him over to the service of Chandragupta. It gives an idea of how the shrewd and resourceful mind of Chanakya worked, and also of his great mastery of the art of statecraft. Stripped of the Indian setting, it is a picture of what happens in most Western States under cover of diplomacy—spying, baiting, spreading false rumours, fostering fifth-columnism, and practising all manner of fraud and knavery. It is pertinent to note that the story of this drama is largely a practical application of Chanakya's theories of politics as enunciated in his famous treatise *Artha-shâstra*.

The translation has been happy and has not materially affected the basic character of the original. The atmosphere of a Sanskrit drama remains intact. The preface, the introductory note, and the postscript—all these have been a useful addition, for they provide a clue to the understanding of the Sanskrit drama and give the readers a wealth of relevant information.

The late Mr. R. S. Pandit, Congress leader, had the reputation of being a deep Sanskrit scholar. This book, coming after his earlier translation of *Râjatarangini*, enhances that reputation.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLIX DECEMBER, 1944 No. 12



"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

"Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached."

THE CLAIM OF THE UPANISHADS

By the Editor

A peculiarity about the Upanishads is that they not only speak of the *Ultimate* Reality, but they claim to impart knowledge of It. They are not mere words of saints, philosophers, and prophets, recorded and reported by their followers, but they are revealed words, mystic poetry, ecstatic dialogues, or inspired monologues, etc. calculated to give life, light, and leading. The Upanishadic seers not only see the truth and the language in which that truth is naturally clothed, but they also claim for their utterances strength enough to place the hearers in the same position vis-a-vis the Truth realized by them. They called the Ultimate Reality 'the Being who is to be known only from the Upanishads' (*Br.*, III. ix. 26). They called their Brahman *Oupanishadam*, knowable from the Upanishads. The *Shvetâshvatarâ Upanishad* describes Brahman as 'hidden in the hidden portions of the Vedas' (V. 6). The *Brahma-sutras* (I. i. 3) confirm these claims of the Upanishads by saying that Brahman is known from the scriptures (i.e., the Vedas). Commenting on this *sutra* Shankara says, 'In realizing truly the nature of this Brahman, the scriptures like the *Rigveda* are the "source," i.e., cause or means of knowledge.' The assertion here is that one can know Brahman through these scriptures just as objects of perception can be known through the senses, or the inferable things through inference—the senses and inference being considered means of knowledge in their respective fields. Perception cannot be had through inference, nor can inferential knowledge be had through perception. Similarly knowledge of Brahman is the close preserve of the Upanishads.

Now, this is a big claim; it sounds like tall talk. The world cannot, perhaps, show anywhere else any assertion comparable to this; for there are two insuperable difficulties in the way. Language cannot fully express any idea or experience of the everyday world, let alone a transcendental thing like Brahman or Its realization. The Upanishadic seers were perfectly aware of the epigram, 'The letter killeth.'

They found no sense in enthusing over mere book-learning; for

That self cannot be attained by much learning, nor by a keen understanding, nor by hearing many scriptures (*Mu.*, III. ii. 3).

In addition to the difficulty inherent in all literary expression, the task was rendered unenviable by the very subject the Upanishads set forth to delineate, for it baffles all sense efforts, all artistic essays, all mental *coup d'œil:*

There eyes cannot reach, nor speech, nor mind. We cannot say we know that, neither do we know how to teach that to others. That (Self) is beyond what is known and what is unknown (*Ke.*, I. 3).

From the spiritual view the Upanishads got round the impossibility of describing an unpresentable presence by declaring that what they presented was revealed knowledge handed down from generation to generation; and this, they claimed, had the power to carry the hearer's mind beyond mere ideas and pictures which the words seem apparently to stand for :

Thus we have heard of It from them of old (*ibid.*).
By the realization of the self, my dear, through hearing, reflection, and meditation, all this is known (*Br.*, II. iv. 5).

It is to be noted that, according to the Upanishads, the essence of knowledge lifts into being from 'hearing' alone, reflection and meditation being needed for making that knowledge fuller, more definite, and permanent. This knowledge is not to be made a personal property leading to mere self-satisfaction; but it should be imparted to suitable candidates (*Mu.*, I. ii. 3). In the *Taittiriya Upanishad* the teacher prays for *brahmachârins* (students of spirituality) to come to him in a constant and swelling flow like rivers running into the sea or months growing into year (I. iv. 3).

Thus the Upanishads cleared the way for the propagation of a truth which is jealous of its secrecy and inscrutability; and thus they avoided entering into a *cul-de-sac* or laying themselves open to the charge of self-contradiction. To unorthodox people this may appear as a crude ingenuity that dodges the real problem of indescribability. We shall not stop here to argue that point; for our present interest lies elsewhere. Nor shall we seek the philosophical justification of revelation as an additional source of valid knowledge or of the claim that the revealed word has the power of awakening a higher kind of response than mere philosophy. We shall take rather a more pragmatic view and see how far this claim is justified by the literary qualities of the Upanishads and their power of appeal. In other words, we shall forget for the time being that we are dealing with revealed literature, but shall rather treat our books as products of literary genius. Looked at from this point of view, the Upanishadic seers will appear to have deliberately aimed at literary finish, a task which naturally followed from and was rendered delightful by their conception of their subject matter as 'bliss' or 'sweetness.'

He, truly, is the sweet essence. Surely by partaking of that sweetness the individual becomes blessed. Who indeed would breathe, who would live if this infinite Bliss were not there? (*Chh.*).

II

Vedantists are condemned as illusionists who can never be good poets. Whatever truth may lie in this, we find, as a matter of fact, that the Upanishads were helped in their insuperable task by their early recognition that Reality cannot be dichotomized into the immanent and the transcendent :

What is here is also there; what is there is also here in strict conformity. He to whom things here appear as rany, travels from death to death (*Kat.*, II. i. 10).

It was imperative, therefore, to develop the 'unitive' outlook, and this consisted in looking on things and thoughts not merely as evanescent particles of matter and mind, but Divinity trying to make itself felt in diverse ways :

He transformed Himself in accordance with each form; that form of His was for the sake of making Him known (*Br.*, II. v. 19).

The perspective was by a single stroke changed from mere forms to the Reality that the forms struggled to express. The Upanishadic mind being thus drawn to forms as well as the ideas for which they stood, gave rise to a peculiar literature which is both realistic and idealistic—realistic in so far as it presents through words a true picture of things and incidents existing and happening in the Upanishadic world, and idealistic in so far as they recognize these things and incidents as partial expressions of a coherent whole. This double standpoint is aptly brought out in the opening verse of the *Ishopanishad :*

> Whatever is fleeting in this transient world should be covered with God. With that non-attachment should the self be saved. Covet not, for to whom can riches belong?

Moreover, literature itself became divinized in the eyes of *rishis*, the seers, and this new vision gave birth to their conception of *Shabda-Brahma*—Word as the symbol or limiting adjunct of Brahman. Thus *Om*, which is the quintessence of all words and everything (*Chh.*, I. i. 2), is also the source of every created thing. Obviously, the *rishis* could not neglect this Word; for 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' So they lay store by the perfection of speech, and for this they prayed to *Shabda-Brahma :*

> That which is the most excellent of Vedic words and is of infinite form, that which arose from the Vedas as their quintessence, may that Divinity rekindle my insight! O God, may I become a receptacle of immortality! May my body be fit, may I be exquisitely sweet-tongued! May I hear infinite things through my ears! Thou art the sheath of Brahman and art covered with the discursive intellect (*Tai.*, I. iv. 1).

This prayer to the highest Deity was supplemented by attention to minor deities of verses, etc. as well as to techniques of learning and uttering letters, words, sentences, verses, and hymns. Nor were the *rishis*, through whom the hymns took shape, left without due honour, since according to Hindu belief the character and inspiration of a composer are reflected in his songs and poems and works of art in general. And so the Upanishads say,

> We shall discourse on learning. (The things to be learnt are)—letters, modulation, measure, accent and emphasis, evenness of sound, and combination (*Tai.*, I. ii).

> One should reflect on the *sâman* with which one would pray, on the *rig* on which the *sâman* rests, on the *rishi* who is the seer (of the *rig*). One should meditate on the deity whom one would eulogize. One should reflect on the rhyme in which one would pray, and on the hymn with which one would pray (*Chh.*, I. iii. 8-10).

Thus the *rishis* were mindful of every factor involved in producing and appreciating good literature. Aiming as they did at spiritual transformation, in any conflict between the head and the heart, they naturally preferred the latter, though the former was not neglected in possible cases. The texts were addressed very often to learned societies and scholars, but oftener the hearers were boys like Nachiketâ, Satyakâma, and Shvetaketu, or women like Maitreyi, who in her simplicity was once constrained to ejaculate: 'Just here you have thrown me into a confusion, sir!'

III

We have so far stated the problem and the equipment with which the Upanishadic seers approached it and expected others to do so. We shall now examine how far they succeeded. Literature is successful in proportion as it records genuine feeling and in proportion as this record is artistically clothed. We shall first look at the feeling so far as it can be judged from recorded words.

The Upanishads harp on direct realization, and the *rishis* more than once raise their vizors for their students to see for themselves the play of deep emotions on their countenances. The atmosphere of detachment and aloofness is very often chased away for the rays of illumination to strike directly. There is no feebleness in the voice, the steps do not falter, the nerves are steady, and the shoulders are thickly set. The hearts throb with feeling and the tongue speaks

out unequivocally. The verses vibrate with contagious life and light. Optimism, courage, and enthusiasm are writ large on them. Aye, the seers can speak out their conviction even before celestial beings who spy into the recesses of people's hearts :

> Hear Ye all the sons of Immortality, Ye who dwell in celestial regions! (*Shv.*, II. 8).

And the stentorian voice of self-confidence and self-contentment rings out :

> I know that great Being whose appearance is like the effulgence of the sun and who is beyond darkness. By knowing Him alone can one get beyond death: There is no other way of approach (*ibid.*, III. 8).

And the eloquent exhortation !

> Awake, arise, and learn by approaching the excellent ones. The seers declare that the path is as impassable as the sharpened blade of a razor (*Kat.*, I. iii. 14).

They do not mince matters ! For a valiant heart is stirred by the knowledge that there are battles to be won.

> Even gods of old had doubts about this; for this subtle Self-knowledge is not easily achieved (*Kat.*).

But there is no cause for dejection; for it can be known by those who like Maitreyi of the *Brihadâranyaka Upanishad* can dash aside all earthly gains with the simple but categorical assertion :

> What shall I do with that which cannot make me immortal?

It is no real drawback that Self-realization cannot be demonstrated : the unshakable conviction is its own test —a conviction that can relume other hearts with the declaration :

> I am the stimulator of the Tree of this universe ; my fame is high like mountain-top ; elevated to the most Holy, I am the excellent immortal Being as He is in the Sun. I am the power, the wealth, refulgent with divine intuition ; I have attained true knowledge ; imperishable and immutable I have become (*Tai.*, I. x).

Burning with a desire for this, even a small boy like Nachiketâ can turn his back to the best things of the world. The emotional appeal is too all-consuming and too irresistible to be ignored; and it is rounded off with the assurance :

> When a person realizes Him in both the high and the low, the knots of his heart are loosened, his doubts dispelled, and his *karmas* exhausted (*Mu.*, II. ii. 8).

But these heroes of the spiritual world had their softer moments too, when they prayed fervently for moral progress and the little physical conveniences that leave men free to think of higher things. On the whole, a reading of the Upanishads convinces us that we are introduced to real human situations and felt emotions which can be our own for the mere asking and which can divinize our lives even in the midst of physical and mental limitations. In fact, the Upanishads focus our attention, interest, and enthusiasm not on possibilities or probabilities but on realities and realization. The reader's attention is often quickened by remarks of astonishing insight, his comprehension is assisted by illuminating phrases, and his spirit elevated by passages of noble eloquence. In this sense the literary value of the Upanishads cannot be gainsaid.

IV

We now turn to the literary beauties of the Upanishads. But before we proceed further, we must make one thing clear—the Upanishads are not philosophical treatises, nor are they anthologies of disconnected poems, epigrams, or catechisms. They are written both in prose and poetry; but the poetry is not laboured versification, nor is the prose mere philosophical disquisition bereft of all art. The poetry deliberately avoids philosophical stiffness and methodology, but aims more at inspiring the will and the emotion to reach a state beyond speech and thought through beautiful similes, imageries, figures of speech, rhythm, and change of perspectives, etc. And the prose through its simplicity, directness, and sincerity breathes poetry at every turn. The prose is resonant with poesy, and the poetry sparkles with direct touch and simple grandeur.

Let us look at the Upanishads more closely. We shall, of course, present the

relevant portions in translation with the full knowledge that translations cannot preserve the sweetness of sound and harmony of movement of the original. In sublime writings, aiming at chastening and deepening of feelings, these are of no little consequence. Our only hope will be that the interested readers will some day look into the originals.

We are, to start with, struck with awe at the grandeur of conception and the wide sweep of imagination expressed in the simplest of language :

Fire is His head ; the sun and moon His eyes ; the quarters His ears ; the Vedas His voice ; the wind His breath ; the universe His heart ; and the earth His feet. Verily He is the indwelling Self of all (*Mu.*, II. i. 5).

For fear of Him the fire burns, for fear shines the Sun, for fear proceed Indra, Vâyu, and Death the fifth (*Kat.*, II. iii. 4).

One example of simple and direct prose, throbbing with life and comparable to the highest poetry will suffice :

From evil lead me to good. From darkness lead me to light. From death lead me to immortality (*Br.*, I. iii. 28).

Mark how the feeling rises in cadence in the following paragraph from the *Brihadâranyaka Upanishad*. The scales fall from the mind's eye one by one till one is left with nothing but one's Self in Its unadorned beauty :

It is not for the sake of the husband, my dear, that he is loved, but for one's own sake that he is loved. It is not for the sake of the wife, my dear, that she is loved, but for one's own sake that she is loved. It is not for the sake of the sons, my dear, that they are loved, but for one's own sake that they are loved. It is not for the sake of wealth, my dear, that it is loved, but for one's own sake that it is loved. . . . It is not for the sake of the worlds, my dear, that they are loved, but for one's own sake that they are loved. . . . It is not for the sake of all, my dear, that all is loved, but for one's own sake that all is loved. The Self, my dear Maitreyi, should be realized—should be heard of, reflected on, and meditated upon (II. iv. 5).

The following quotation—this time from the *Kenopanishad*, which is in verse—can hardly fail to rivet the attention on the prime dynamic factor in life, mental and physical :

That which cannot be revealed by speech, but which reveals speech, know that to be Brahman and not this which is objectively worshipped.

That which the eyes cannot see, but that by which the eyes see, know that to be Brahman and not this which is worshipped objectively.

That which cannot be vitalized by life, but that by which life is enlivened, know that to be Brahman and not this which is worshipped objectively.

One device by which the Upanishads sought to impart direct knowledge of Brahman was to put in contrast Its immanent and transcendent aspects so that the mind might struggle for a higher synthesis which could not but culminate in realization. This effort, by its very nature, gave expression to some of the most eloquent and inspiring passages in the Upanishads:

Without hands and feet He moves fast and grasps. Without eyes He sees. Without ears He hears. He knows whatever is to be known, though none knows Him. They say, He is before all, and He is the great infinite Being (*Shv.*, III. 19).

It is by rude shocks to the commonsense and scientific views of the world that the mind gets the true angle of vision; and so we hear :

That is infinite and this is infinite. The infinite proceeds from the infinite. Then taking the infinitude of the infinite, it remains as the infinite alone (*Br.*, V. i. 1).

This is not just a riddle, but the most intelligible language possible in the world we have chosen to tread.

We purposely desist from quoting passages that can reveal literary beauty from the standpoint of an Eastern critic trained in the technicalities of rhetoric and prosody, nor can we hope to preserve those beauties in translation for the appreciation of the uninitiated. But we can present similes and imageries comparable with the best of their kind.

As one fire, having entered the world, assumes forms according to the things ignited, so the one *Atman*, dwelling in all, assumes forms according to the objects (entered into); and still It stays beyond.

As the sun, the eye of all, is not contaminated by the external ocular impurities, so, being beyond the world, the one *Atman* that resides in all is not touched by the miseries of the world (*Kat.*, II. ii. 9-11).

Birds of a feather may flock together physically, but they remain spiritually

distant: they are 'at once far off and near':

Two birds of beautiful plumage, who are inseparable friends, reside on the self-same tree. Of these, one eats the fruits of the tree with relish while the other looks on without eating.

Sitting on the same tree the individual soul gets entangled and feels miserable, being deluded on account of his forgetting his divinity. When he sees the other, the Lord of all, whom all worship, and realizes that all greatness is His, then he is relieved of his misery (*Shv.*, IV. 6-7).

We cannot go on multiplying instances, tempted though we feel. We shall, therefore, conclude by drawing attention to another feature of the Upanishads, viz. their masterly character-paintings and swift but graphic presentation of incidents. Nachiketa, Satyakama, Yajnavalkya, and Pravahana Jaivali can adorn any literature. And how vivacious is Gargi!

As a man of Benares or the King of Videha, scion of a warlike dynasty, might string his unstrung bow and appear close by, carrying in his hand two bamboo-tipped arrows highly painful to the enemy, even so, O Yâjnavalkya, do I confront you with two questions. Answer me those (*Br.*, III. viii. 2).

The dramatic effect is irresistible. Surely on those questions hangs a world, and we wait with animated suspense.

INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD CIVILIZATION

By Principal Lakshman Sarup, M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon), Officier D'Academie (France)

The subject of India's contribution to world civilization is very vast. Several volumes can be easily written on it. It is, therefore, obvious that it cannot be treated adequately in a short paper. This paper must necessarily be incomplete. A few facts only can be attempted.

Professor Hugo Winkler discovered a few tablets at Bogaz-Koi. These tablets are unanimously attributed to 1500 B.C. The decipherment of these tablets shows that India contributed four Gods—Indra, Mitra, Varuna, and Nasatya to Asia Minor before 1500 B.C.

The Persian Emperor Xerxes invaded Greece and was defeated at the battle of Platae. After this battle, the Persian commander Mardonius was left with select troops, among whom was an Indian contingent. The Indians fought bravely and impressed even their enemies, the Greeks. Herodotus, the father of Greek history, has recorded the dress, the weapons, the deeds, etc., of the Indians in his famous history. Ancient Greeks were thus brought into contact with ancient Indians with the result that the ancient Greeks imbibed Indian philosophy, the most important exponent of which was Pythagoras in the fifth century and later Plotinus in the first century. Plotinus was a Vedantist. His system bears on it the stamp of Hindu thought. Indian philosophers have again and again emphasized the idea that the Absolute, which is also the Infinite, cannot be apprehended by the finite human mind, nor expressed in the limited human speech. The best way of cognition is by the process of elimination, i.e., to say that He is neither this nor that. The famous expression of Indian philosophy is *na iti*, 'He is not this.' It constitutes the central idea in the philosophy of Plotinus. The following quotation from Plotinus does not stand in need of any comment and will convince any impartial reader of his indebtedness to Indian thought: 'We say what He is not, we cannot say what He is.' He remarks,

When we say that He is above being, we do not say that He is this or that. We affirm nothing; we do not give Him any name. . . . We do not try to understand Him: it would in fact be laughable to try to understand that incomprehensible nature. But we . . . do not know what to call Him. . . . Even the name of the One expresses no more than the negation of His plurality.

. . . The problem must be given up, and research fall into silence. What is the good of seeking when further progress is impossible? . . . If we wish to speak of God, or to conceive Him, let us give up everything. When this has been done . . . let us examine rather whether there is still not something to be given up.

Plotinus is known to have travelled in the East and to have come in contact with Indian philosophers. The philosophy of Plotinus stands apart from the Greek thought and points out to India as the source of its inspiration.

The British School of Egyptian Archaeology excavated the site of the ancient capital of Egypt, i.e., Memphis, under the leadersdip of Sir Flinders Petrie. Many statues were discovered. They have been identified with Indian types. I need not bore the reader with their detailed description.[1] Sir Flinders Petrie has come to the conclusion that the discovery of these statues proves the existence of an Indian colony in ancient Egypt about 500 B.C. Now, one of the statues is of an Indian who sits cross-legged in deep meditation like a Yogi. It is surmised that ideas of asceticism which was unknown in ancient Egypt and which appeared in Egypt about this time, must have been due to contact with Indians, as in India, the history of asceticism can be traced to a hoary antiquity right up to the Vedic times.

Sir Aurel Stein, a former Principal of the Oriental College, Lahore, led several expeditions to Central Asia, excavated sand-buried ancient towns and sites, and brought back rich harvest in the form of Mss., archaeological finds, paintings, etc. The results of the several expeditions are published in *Ancient Khotan* (2 Vols.), *Serindia* (5 Vols.), and *Innermost Asia* (several Vols.). Sir Aurel Stein discovered that ancient India established colonies in central Asia and ruled there for several centuries. Not only did they impose a Government on the country but also their language—a kind of Prâkrita, which was the official language and remained the language of administration for several centuries.

[1] The detailed description can be read in my paper published by the Punjab University Historical Society.

Like the British, the French, the German, the Russian, and the Japanese Governments also sent expeditions to Central Asia, and each expedition brought back rich materials. The study of these materials shows that *Râmâyana* and *Mahâbhârata* were translated into languages of Central Asia—Khotanese, Manichian, Kuchian, etc. The heroic deeds of Ghatotkacha, son of Bhima, were particularly read with great interest as several translations of this episode from the *Mahâbhârata* have been discovered in Central Asia.

Numerous Sanskrit works were translated into Tibetan and Chinese. A large number of Sanskrit texts are no longer available in their original Sanskrit but are preserved in their Tibetan and Chinese translations. The two Tibetan Encyclopaedias consist entirely of translations of Sanskrit works. Hundreds of Indian monks were engaged in translating Sanskrit works into Chinese. Just as European nuns come to India at present and open educational institutions for Indian girls, similarly Indian nuns went to China and founded schools and colleges for the education of Chinese girls. At one time there were several thousand Indian nuns in China.

With the spread of Buddhism into Tibet, China, Korea, Annam, Siam, and other parts of Central and Eastern Asia, Indian philosophy, Indian art, Indian architecture, Indian literature, Indian games, Indian medicine, Indian music, etc., migrated freely and have left indelible impression on those countries.

Ancient India engaged in remarkable maritime activities and established powerful kingdoms in Java, Sumatra, and Indonesia, a short account of which will be found in my paper published in the Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society.

The *Panchatantra* was translated into Pehlvi, then into Arabic, Persian, Latin, Greek, and almost all the languages of Europe including Icelandic. The Indian method of telling a tale within a tale was universally followed, e.g., in *One*

Thousand and One Nights (Alf-Lela in Arabic), in the *Pentamerone* and *Decamerone*. in Italian. Indian tales are found all over Europe and in the literatures of all languages of Europe. La Fontaine included them in his famous work in French. Sir Thomas North adopted them in English and were utilized by Shakespeare in a modified form in his plays.

Shakuntalâ deeply impressed the greatest of modern European poets and playwrights, Goethe. The prologue of his master-piece *Faust* is modelled on the prologue of *Shakuntalâ*.

Schopenhauer is a *darshanakâra* (founder of a system of philosophy) of modern Europe. He read the Latin translation of the Upanishads. The Latin translation was prepared from Persian and was almost unintelligible, but even the study of this difficult and imperfect translation impressed him deeply and he exclaimed, 'This is the solace of my life : this will be the solace of my death.'

Von Humboldt was a great intellectual aristocrat of Germany. His position in Germany was similar to the position of Tolstoy in Russia and his influence in Germany was something like that exercised by Rabindranath Tagore in India. He read a translation of Bhagavadgita and blessed himself for it. The influence of the Gita on Carlyle and Emerson is evident and is now so generally recognized that I need hardly write anything about it.

After the downfall of Napoleon, English and German literatures had a tremendous influence on French literature. This influence gave rise to the most puissant movement in French literature, entitled the Romantic Movement.[2] Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Vigne, Musset, Victor Hugo, Dumas, and others, drew inspiration from it. Similarly the German translations of Sanskrit works produced a very powerful movement in German literature. It was called the storm and the stress movement. In short, the introduction of Sanskrit language and literature in Europe has produced what may be called the Second Renaissance. The First Renaissance in Europe was produced by the introduction of ancient Greek literature at the dawn of the Modern Age.

Both in painting and sculpture, India has made a distinct and remarkable contribution in the form of the Ajanta School of painting and the Gandhara and the Mathura Schools of Sculpture. The dancing figure of Shiva as Nataraja, dancing the cosmic dance, is a masterpiece of the world.

[2] For the history of the Romantic Movement in French literature, see my article in *The Modern Review*, March 1928.

INDIA'S AWAKENER: THE MASTER AND THE MAGAZINE

By St. Nihal Singh

I

As I sat, in the morning, at the radio listening in to the news that was being transmitted from the London studios of the British Broadcasting Corporation to any one and every one in North America, who might care to hear it, I saw a figure being led through the front door into my study—led, rather than conducted. While one man held the heavily springed, insect-proofed, gauze door ajar, another who had taken him by the hand guided him through the corridor on towards a softly cushioned sofa.

A few minutes later, when I joined him, he was holding a magazine almost against his eyes. The eyes were opened so wide that the whites looked like those of a giant. A giant he himself was, to be sure. His large, heavy-set figure filled the sofa.

Seeing that he had been having difficulty in deciphering the large letters on the title page, I helped him by saying :

'*The Prabuddha Bharata*. It is edited from the Himalayan recesses beyond Almora. This is the latest issue. The postman left it a few hours back. I am reading it. You find it, hence, here and not in its appointed place upon the library table.'

Thinking that, perhaps, on account of his physical handicap, he may not be aware of its existence, I added after an instant's pause :

'This Magazine was founded by the Swami Vivekananda. A portrait of him, in a frame, stands upon the mantelpiece just back of you next to his Master's (Guru's)—the Paramahamsa Ramakrishna. He came into my life very early—kindled a fire in it.'

'He came into my life, too, very early,' the visitor added, before my voice had died down. 'I was at school then. I had just passed from the middle into the high school. It was 1897.

'To Ludhiana, where I lived with my parents,' he went on 'came the news that a Bengali was passing through the province. He wore the *gerua* (ochre-coloured) robe over his stalwart, broad-shouldered figure and wound a short length of cotton, similar in hue, round his massive head. Nothing strange in all that. *Sanyasis* (the Punjabi form of the Sanskrit *Sannyâsins*) often came to the capital of the Punjab and went from it.

'He was, however, different from the rest. He spoke English—spoke it fluently and faultlessly. What was more, he had been abroad. He had been to America and Europe.

'My friends and I felt curious about this Swami. Lahore is no distance at all from Ludhiana. So a few of us bundled into a third class compartment and off we went to see him and hear him for ourselves.

'He was lecturing at Raja Dhian Singh's Haveli (mansion).

'Hardly had he opened his mouth, when we realized that the reports that had reached us were not exaggerated—not a bit of it. Words poured from his lips—simply poured. What words they were!—full of inspiration, though our knowledge of English then was limited. His lecture lifted us off our feet. On the spot, that very instant, I, for one, registered the vow that I, too, would go to America. . . .

'But I am rattling on. You must know all this—perhaps, more.'

II

'Yes! Yes!!,' I responded. 'I remember—remember as distinctly as if it happened yesterday.'

The Swami Vivekananda had arrived at Ambala. Thence he had gone to Amritsar and, I believe, to Dharamsala or Dalhousie. Back to Amritsar, he had proceeded to Lahore.

I had been hearing about the Swamiji long before then—ever since 1893, in fact. That was meant to be a memorable year in my life. Father lived at the time in Amritsar.

To it came Dadabhai Naoroji, fresh from his success at the English polls, shortly after being sworn in as the first Indian Member of Parliament. I, about ten, met him and even held converse with him. This encounter turned father's eye outwards—he began subscribing to the Indian National Congress's London organ, *India*. In the pages of that newspaper or some other, I cannot say for sure, he read of the great impression that the Swamiji made in America.

The Master took the vast and distinguished assemblage gathered at the grand international exposition in Chicago by storm. Americans, men and women, rich and poor, begged him to make them his disciples. Many sat at his feet. Some of these I met a few

years later when I went to the United States.

The same thing happened when the Master went to Europe. People fell at his feet—deemed it a privilege to sit at his feet. Father had read accounts of the meetings addressed by the Swamiji in London and other centres in Britain and of the converts to Hinduism that he had made.

The Hinduization of Americans and Europeans struck my imagination powerfully. Till then I had heard of conversions away from the Hindu fold—invariably away from Hinduism.

There lived in the small Punjab town, Hoshiarpur, to which we shifted, I think, in 1895, a Bengali—the Reverend Doctor Chatterjee. As a young man, he had been converted to Christianity. He came from Calcutta and settled down in our province. He had a broad, open, kindly, smiling face. His person was always well groomed—the black of his coat, buttoned to the neck, set off the long, flowing white beard. His manner with us boys was gentle, affable, towards me even cordial. He spoke beautiful English, each word separate from the one that preceded it, so that I could understand him without difficulty. He preached every Sunday in a tiny church near the court in which my father worked and I, eager to perfect my Phonography (Pitman's system of shorthand), went and took down as much of his sermons as I could. My mother, when she came to know of it, considered this to be a dangerous practice. She thought—and said in no uncertain terms—that father should stop my going to that Christian fane, otherwise there was no knowing what might happen.

Conversion in reverse gear that the Swamiji had inaugurated in Christendom's stronghold greatly appealed to my imagination. He must be a great man, I argued to myself, to be able to do so and vowed that I should model my life upon the pattern he had set.

III

It happened that about the time of the Swamiji's visit to the Punjab, I, then in my teens, began to write for the press. Papers and magazines held for me a fascination that was to grow as I grew. It was essentially an inherited passion. This for me proved fortunate. The publications that father took in, some expressly for my benefit, included one that the Master had started shortly after his return from the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago—later the centre of my journalistic activities. I wonder if there are many journalists alive and active who began reading *The Prabuddha Bharata* from almost its inception.

'Awakened India' he called it. Awakener of India it was—and is—at least of Young India, though men of my father's generation were also stirred—visibly stirred.

The early issues that fell in my hands in those days when I was precociously passing from boyhood to manhood electrified my being. They appealed to me particularly because of the patriotic impulse that ran through the pages.

At this distance of time, it is not possible for me to tell whether certain matter that found lodgement in my memory emanated from *The Prabuddha Bharata* or through another source or sources connected with the Master. Indelibly imprinted upon my cerebral tissue are passages burning with patriotic fervour.

While the Swamiji was, for instance, on the point of leaving the West, or, possibly, actually on board the steamer making for an Indian port, some one—I believe, an Englishman—suggested to him that after many years of America and Europe he would find India tame—insipid. 'Why?' asked that great son of the motherland. Absence from her had touched his love for her with fire.

The very dust of India had become to him sacred.[1]

Then, too, I recall a passage-at-arms between a cow-worshipper and the Swamiji. This man—a Brahmin by birth, I think or, at least, an enthusiast in the cause of cows—was describing at great length the good work that he and persons associated with him were doing in taking care of the aged, infirm, and diseased animals. But for their exertions, many of the *gomâtâs* (cow-mothers) would have by then fallen into the hands of some butcher or other. Killed they, worshipful as a mother though they were, would have been—consumed as meat by persons of desire.

Had this good man engaged in that worthy work heard, asked the Swamiji, that not far from him—in the very heart of India—a famine was raging. Tiny tots, still fresh from the kingdom of God, with souls unsullied by the wicked breath of life, were dying like flies. Men and women, in their prime, were perishing. Of the aged who had succumbed to the gnawings of hunger there was no count. Had this worker in the cause of cows heard of this awful tragedy; and, if heard, what had he, at the head of his fellow-philanthropists done to stay the hand of starvation—to assuage human pain and privation? What? What?

'It is their *karma*, Swamiji, to suffer—to die,' quoth he, complacently. 'It is their *karma*. They must have done evil deeds in their previous life—perhaps, lives.

'What can we do to avert the fate they brought upon themselves? And if we do, we shall only serve to prolong the agony for them?

'They are bound to reap as they sowed. That is the law—the inescapable law of *kármá*.

'But none knows this better than you, Swamiji. It is presumption upon my part to give tongue to these eternal—eternal—verities. . . .'

Enraged at this complacent sanctimoniousness—wroth at this crass callousness to other persons' agonizing need—infuriated at the twisting of the ancient philosophy to stifle the impulse of humanity—the Master, who could be bitingly sarcastic, asked this humbug:

'And what of your cattle? Do you not think that they are lame and halt, infirm and diseased, because they committed bad *karma* in their previous life—perhaps, lives? Why save them from the butcher, when their *karma* has predestined them to his knife?'[2]

Whatever I read as coming from the Swami Vivekananda, much of it in this magazine, was to me a prod to come out of the 'rat hole' into which our people had burrowed themselves, hugging, in the gloom, concepts and institutions that were a travesty of the noble

[1] 'India I loved before I came away. Now the very dust of India has become holy to me, the very air is now to me holy, it is now the holy land, the place of pilgrimage, the Tirtha.' (P. 541. *The Life of Swami Vivekananda* in 2 vols).

[2] Swamiji: When lakhs and lakhs of your own countrymen and co-religionists are succumbing to this dreadful famine, do you not think it your duty to help these miserable creatures, by giving them a morsel of food?

Preacher: No, this famine has broken out as a result of their Karma, their sins. . . .

Hearing these words the Swami's face became flushed and his eyes glared at the speaker. But suppressing his emotions he exclaimed: 'Sir, I have no sympathy with such organizations which do not feel for man, which seeing before their eyes thousands of their famished brothers perishing from starvation do not care to save them by offering even a morsel of food but spend millions for the protection of birds and beasts. . . .'

The preacher . . . . said: 'Of course what you say is true, but our *shâstra* says: "The cow is our mother" ' . . . .

Amused at these words the Swami said: 'Yes, the cow is our mother, I can very well understand. Otherwise who else will give birth to such talented sons. . . .'

After the preacher had left the Swami said to those about him the nonsense that man talked! 'What is the use of helping those who are dying due to their own karma! That is the reason why the country has gone to rack and ruin. Did you see to what a monstrous extreme your doctrine of Karma is dragged!'

(Pages 594-595. *The Life of Swami Vivekananda* in 2 volumes).

truths and practices that sages had taught and enjoined upon us in an era when our forbears dwelt in the golden sunshine of freedom. These exhortations came to me during the years when the hot, scorching winds of sophistication were drying up the springs of enthusiasm. They powerfully affected my being.

IV

In the early twenties of my life, aspiration for living in uplifting company carried me from the Punjab to the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. A little way beyond the point where the Varuna (Hindiized as Barnâ) clasps *Gangâ Mai*, as some three miles to the east does Asi—the region between the two small streams forming Vârânasi, corrupted into Benares—I lived with the Anagarika (the homeless) Dharmapala.

He had met the Swamiji at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago. The two had instantly taken to each other, instead of regarding themselves as rivals, as lesser men may easily have done.

The Prabuddha Bharata was regularly received at the small structure that the Anagarika had built in the shadow of the *stupa*, much mangled by the ravening tooth of Time, dating it was said, from Asoka's days. So were many other publications—from India, Ceylon, the Far East, the United States of America, Britain, and the continent.

The Anagarika always picked out the 'Awakened India' from the pile left by the postman, tore the wrapper and glanced through the pages, reading in his quick, nervous way, anything that specially interested him. I followed his example, hardly had he laid down the magazine.

He had old numbers of it, some bound, others in piles, neatly held together with tape. These were kept in cases, the glazed doors of which were never locked, in the small oblong chamber that served as a library as well as a sitting room, I used to take out a volume or a number and read—it was really re-read—any note, letter, saying of the Paramahamsa Ramakrishna or of the Swami Vivekananda or any article that specially attracted me at the moment.

One day, as I sat there, a single horse-drawn vehicle (*ekkâ*) was creakingly brought to a halt. From it emerged a young man, who, as he advanced towards me, was, I instantly saw, of much the age as I was. The letter he handed me had been given him by a Brahmin from the Punjab—the Pandit Ram Narain Misra—who then was serving in Benares as a District Inspector of Schools. His zeal in the cause of advancing one of our national languages—the ignorant called it 'vernacular' as if it were the lingo of the vulgar, as I fear some continue to do so to this day—had made Panditji my kin.

This young man was from Ludhiana, I learnt from the letter and from him. When he was in High School in 1897 he had been lifted off his feet by the message that the Swami Vivekananda had given to the Punjabis gathered in Raja Dhian Singh's Haveli in Lahore. He wished to go to the West—to the United States of America—to study. He had little money. Would I introduce him to the Anagarika Dharmapala and get from him a recommendation that would enable him to enter an American University without having to pay any fee? He had his wish.

Now he is old. My own hair is snow-strewn, as is the crest of the Himalaya, at whose feet I live and work in the sacred vale of the Hindus—Dehra Dun—associated with the name of the *Mahâbhâratic âchârya* Drona.

V

The magazine, edited from the Himalayan recesses, not so very far from me in these days of the aeroplane, that is delivered through the post month by month, has managed, however, to remain young in robustness of expression and vital—and vitalizing—in

thought. Charged for evermore (so I feel) with the dauntless spirit of the sage who founded it, it brings hope, inspiration and wisdom—true wisdom—in the fulfilment of the twofold mission for which, in my view, it was ushered into being.

Its primary aim is to give us cultural nutriment—the nutriment without which our national pride would be but the bleating of the goat or the braying of the ass. This is derived from the achievement in every domain of thought and every sphere of life's striving during the many thousands of years that we, as an enduring entity, have functioned in this land, the very dust of which to us is holy.

Its secondary aim,—as I discerned it long, long ago when the words of the Master first found lodgement within my mind—is to tell us of the striving of those men, who left home, parted from kin—so that they may achieve their salvation through saving others—through saving myriads of bodies from starvation, disease, and miseries—myriads of minds from ignorance with its root deep down in *ahankâra* (I-ness, ego)—myriads of souls from the corruptions of materialism and the sordidness bred by that intensely selfish system.

Vivekananda had found, I remember, the *sannyâsin* striving 'for personal *mukti* and realization of the Supreme *Âtman* by severe penance and meditation, remaining as much aloof from the world and its cares and sorrows, according to the prevailing Hindu idea, sanctified by tradition and sanctioned by the sages from the Vedic period down to the present day.'[3] That was the practice in the closing decades of the nineteenth century.

The Master exhorted the '*sannyâsins* in India' to 'dedicate their lives to help and to save others'. He bade each monk 'to sacrifice his own life for others, to alleviate the misery of millions rending the air with their cries, to wipe away the tears from the eyes of the widow, to console the heart of the bereaved mother, to provide the ignorant and the depressed masses with the ways and means for struggle for existence and make them stand on their own feet, to preach broadcast, the teachings of the Shastras to one and all without distinction, for their material and spiritual welfare, to rouse the sleeping lion of Brahman of Knowledge.'[4]

It is well that *The Prabuddha Bharata* should bring us, month by month, tidings of men engaged in such striving, in addition to giving us knowledge of the holy dust in which lies the root of our individual and national being—knowledge, too, of that root and of the mighty oak that has sprung from it. In this dual task, I wish the Magazine godspeed as it is poised to enter—enthusiastically, manfully enter—the second half of its initial century.

[3] Page 600, in 2 volumes. *The Life of Swami Vivekananda.*
[4] Page 606, *ibid.*

INCENTIVES IN A PLANNED ECONOMY

By Prof. Hirendra Lal Dey, M.A., D.Sc. (London)

I

A planned economy aims at achieving a definite, predominant, social purpose. In exceptional circumstances and for short period, its purpose may be to acquire military power, as was the case with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, and also with Soviet Russia in the early stages of its experiment with communism in the face of strong and active hostility from powerful nations. But, as a rule and from a long-range view, a planned economy would seek to abolish unemployment and poverty, remove inequality of wealth and income and thus

impart substance to the ideas of liberty and equality and invest man with true dignity which is his birth-right. The carrying out of such a plan would demand a complete overhauling of the existing economic machine. In the first place, it would abolish the profit motive, the love of personal gain as the mainspring of economic activity. Secondly, it would require complete State control of all major activities : the State would distribute labour and capital and raw materials among all industries and see to the execution of the plan; and it would decide what things are to be produced and how much of each thing, how much of the national output is to be consumed and how much saved, and how many men are to be employed in each occupation and sometimes even who those men are to be.

It is obvious that this change in the structure and operation of the economic machine would be fundamental. Individual freedom of enterprise, of choice of occupations, and of spending and saving would largely disappear. In other words, many of the powerful incentives which have been in operation during all these centuries and which have brought about an unprecedented increase in wealth would be altogether destroyed. The question, therefore, is, Can a planned economy call into play equally strong incentives so as to ensure the efficient working of the economic system? And this question is being asked not only by hostile critics who are prejudiced by their vested interests or social sympathies but also by many front-rank philosophers, social scientists and economists whose disinterestedness cannot be doubted.

II

Now, the chief factors which have contributed to progress under the present economic system are (*a*) Enterprise, (*b*) Application of Science to Industry, (*c*) Growth of Capital, and (*d*) Labour. How will these factors behave in a planned economy?

The Enterpreneur, the man of enterprise, the 'captain of industry' as he has been aptly called, is the person who takes upon himself the main burden of organizing and managing modern industry. In making his decisions as to what things should be produced and how much of each thing should be produced, he is influenced by the expectation of gain and the fear of loss. He looks to the movement of prices upwards and downwards and estimates the probable market demand in the future. He also estimates his costs at various levels of output. And, he plans his production accordingly. He is making continuous experiments with new methods and processes and with new combinations of labour and machinery, so as to minimize his costs and maximize his profits. It is he, again, who has to apply in practice the discoveries of modern science. If he is successful in his estimates and his experiments, he receives a high reward in the shape of profits. But, the market is often a changing one, and he has to work in the midst of uncertainty. If his expectations go wrong or his experiments fail, he is heavily punished by being put to losses.

Be it noted, however, that this mechanism of production works almost automatically and impersonally. There is no direction or dictation issued forth from any authoritative quarters. He has to read and follow as best as he can the unspoken directions given by the economic system itself in the shape of changing prices and costs. His rewards and punishments are also meted out automatically and impersonally. There is no Hitler or Mussolini or Stalin to issue the orders and give the rewards and punishments. And, further, most persons have not to bother themselves as to how and where to get the things they want. It is the duty of businessmen to anticipate the demand of the people, produce things in advance and arrange to bring them to the very door of the would-be consumers. A man or a woman has simply to walk or drive down

to the market, say what he or she wants, and pay for it and get it. Thus it would appear that the system of competitive or capitalist economy, while ensuring full liberty of action to the producers and freedom of choice to the consumers, acts automatically, impersonally, efficiently.

III

Will a planned economy, in which State enterprise will replace private enterprise, be as efficient in its working as the capitalist system has been in the past? The answer is as follows: In the first place, though it is true that the capitalist economy has brought about a vast increase in the production of wealth, that wealth has been most inequitably distributed. The lion's share of that wealth has gone to those few who have been born to the privileges of wealth, which has placed them in command of capital or given them the advantages of higher education or training so as to enable them to monopolize the best paid and least irksome jobs. And a smaller share has fallen to the lot of the many, who could not start off with those advantages and who, therefore, could secure only the lowest paid and least interesting jobs. This initial difference between the two sections of the people tends to grow cumulatively and be perpetuated. Like the castes of the Hindu society, the classes of the capitalist society tend to be fixed and rigid as a rule, and the few exceptions where a man can rise from the Log Cabin or the Tan Yard to the White House or from the coal pits to the Cabinet do not alter the general picture of the situation.

In consequence of this unequal and inequitable distribution of wealth, much potential productive power among the poorer classes—that is, inventive faculty, skill and intensity of work—remains dormant. Besides, the poorer classes, who form a majority in every modern society, are always weighed down by an acute sense of injustice, of deprivation and of frustration, and this causes a lot of friction in the working of the economic machine. Secondly, due to lack of co-ordination among the producers and on account of their being influenced in their activities more by motives of speculation and by irrational waves of optimism and pessimism than by a reasoned forecast of the future, the economic system works jerkily and unsteadily and produces alternate spells of prosperity and depression, of full employment and unemployment, and of rising and falling prices. And this costs society a good deal in terms of uncertainty and insecurity and unhappiness. Thirdly, the price economy of the capitalist system does not and cannot take into account some of the social costs of production. The owner of a jute mill, for instance, in calculating his costs, does not allow for the public nuisance and ill-health caused by the smoke and dust and ugliness of the factory. But, from the social point of view, this disservice should form a big item on the debit side of his account. Fourthly, he does not pay for the costs of the scientific discoveries or put all or many of them to the service of industry. And, most important of all, the capitalist system has no incentive to supply some of the basic requirements of a modern society, such as education, sanitation, public parks, museums, picture galleries, and sometimes even wholesome food, because they cannot bring good profits to the producers. On the other hand, it has an inherent tendency to produce many things which are a danger to the society, e.g., armaments of all kinds, dangerous drugs and narcotics, adulterated food-stuffs, and so on. These are dangerous flaws in the very heart of the capitalist system, and all attempts to remove them through State intervention in a haphazard and piecemeal manner, e.g., through factory law, poor relief, social insurance schemes, have barely touched the fringe of the problem. In estimating the relative efficiency of the two systems, therefore,

we must put all these big items in the scales against the capitalist system.

IV

Let us now turn to another aspect of the question. The aim of a planned economy is to produce and supply the basic requirements of a good life for all. It will, first of all, provide adequate and nourishing food, sufficient clothing and housing, and basic education and essential medical aid to all the citizens. And, in calculating the quantities to be produced and the qualitative grades to be provided, it will be guided not by considerations of purchasing power of the customers or of profits, but by the dictates of the physical, biological, and social sciences. But, it may be asked, would not this pattern of economy be an interference with the freedom of the consumers, because it will give them not what they themselves want, but what the State decides that they should want and have? And, further, if the lives of the individuals were to be regimented in this way, would not this mean a serious curtailment of their happiness, because there cannot be happiness without freedom? The answer is that, in the capitalist society, freedom of choice of consumption belongs only to the few. For the many, the majority, that freedom does not really exist. For them, the alternative is, not to choose some things out of many things available to them but to have or not to have at all the barest needs of life. Secondly, the freedom of choice that is enjoyed by the few is often the freedom to waste and to pursue mere animal pleasures in a reckless manner, and not the freedom that would impart moral quality to life or increase their mental and physical efficiency. So far as the basic or elementary needs of an efficient existence are concerned, they are equally common to all the members of a society. And, when these needs have been supplied to all, the residual productive power, which should increase by stages, may be devoted to the production of a growing variety of goods to satisfy individual tastes or idiosyncracies. And, lastly, a planned economy will aim at an equitable distribution of wealth as well as leisure, so that the increasing amount of leisure available to all individuals can be utilized, if they like it, in producing a variety of goods for themselves.

V

But what guarantee is there that the managers of factories in a planned economy, who would receive fixed salaries, will do their best to improve productive efficiency? For there will not be in operation that incentive of higher profit or that fear of loss which spurs on a private producer to make continuous improvements. But, in place of profit, a planned economy will substitute new incentives, such as the satisfaction of having done a duty well, the honour of rendering a distinguished public service, and approbation of fellow citizens and public authorities. On the other hand, inefficiency will be checked and punished by public condemnation, loss of prestige with fellow workers, and degradation. History of civilization shows that the credit for the highest achievements in science and arts, in politics, and in social reconstruction belongs to a few individuals who are irresistibly impelled to do socially desirable things for the love of their work itself, or for the love of their fellow beings or their country, and not for pecuniary gain or even for fame. Again, a second group of men are impelled to do good things by the desire to obtain public approbation or public honours. And, even among those who work for private profit, there are many who want wealth as a ladder of ascent to a position of honour in society. A planned economy will, therefore, discourage the operation of the baser motives and stimulate the nobler ones, through a well-conceived system of public honours and dishonours and of promotion and degradation in rank.

But, how will efficiency and inefficiency be checked in such a system, where the measuring rod of profit and loss will be out of use? The answer is that efficiency is a relative term and that relative efficiency will be measured by comparing the results shown by different factories in the same industry. There will be a central department of inspectors and auditors, whose officers will periodically review the results shown by different factories and draw up a report which will be published. Besides, the cost-accounts and the statistical data to be maintained by the factories will be clearly and scientifically drawn up; there will be no room for secrecy or manipulation; and they will be open to scrutiny not only by inspectors and auditors from the centre but also by representative workers and members of the public. Under such a system, the whole business of production will be frequently subjected to the glaring searchlight of public criticism. We must also remember that the entire psychological set-up in such a planned economy will be different to what is usually found in a capitalist economy. The spirit of rivalry, of competition, of achieving professional distinction through meritorious work, of striving for advancement in social rank and position—all this is woven up into the very texture of human nature, though it expresses itself in different forms in different circumstances. In a capitalist economy its great energy is employed in the quest for wealth and yet more wealth, because wealth is there the most obvious measure of superior merit. In a planned economy this particular outlet will be altogether blocked and the powerful instinct of rivalry will be sublimated and directed into the channel of public service for social approbation and distinction, and the men of proved merit will be publicly honoured by the award of badges of distinction or certificates of merit. The stimulation of such social instincts to very good effect is often seen in the world of sports and in the field of battle. It has also been found to be very successful in the grand experiment with planned economy in Soviet Russia.

VI

As to the application of science to industry, capitalist economy has done something but not as much as was possible and necessary. The producers in such a system are generally slow and excessively cautious in utilizing the discoveries of science, because their application in practice involves further technological experiments which are costly and which may or may not turn out to be profitable. Before the great war of 1914-18, the capitalist-producers even in the most advanced countries proved to be too old-fashioned to care to keep pace with the discoveries of the physical and biological sciences or to plan and initiate technological experiments on any appreciable scale. The only two notable exceptions to this rule of easy complacency were the chemical industry of Germany and the sugar industry of the Dutch East Indies. In the inter-war period of 1919-39, the most important cases of the practical application of science to industry were the Tennessy Valley River Training and Development Scheme in the U.S.A., the reclamation of wide stretches of marshy and malaria-ridden lands in Italy, and the great technical progress made in the manufacture of automobiles, aeroplanes, wireless apparatus and rayon, and synthetic oil, rubber and wool. But, among these, there are only two, viz. automobile and rayon, which we owe to the initiative and enterprise of private capitalists, all the rest being mainly due to State planning and enterprise. The fact of the matter really is that private producers have shown themselves to be quite incompetent to understand and tackle the dynamics of the modern economic system and to grasp the relevance of scientific progress to the problems of social life. Consequently, the State is being called upon

to undertake scientific experiments on an expanding scale and to utilize the results in the service of industry. But, even the State in a capitalist society has to labour under the weight of hoary traditions and ancient prejudices and against the active opposition of powerful vested interests, and it cannot go far in planning or carrying out scientific researches on a truly national scale.

VII

But, what about the creation of capital, the setting aside of a portion of the nation's output of wealth for enlarging its productive equipment in the form of machinery, facilities of transport, buildings, and so on? Now, the growth and functioning of capital in a capitalist society is governed by the play of factors like the rate of interest, the policy of the bankers, the scale of activities undertaken by the producers, and the attitude of the general mass of its income-receivers towards the present and the future. The forces at work are diverse and conflicting, and the outcome is small and uncertain. In a planned economy, on the other hand, the mode of operation is a simple and effective one. The planning authority decides in advance as to what portion of the annual output of wealth should go to the enlargement of productive equipment and just does not allow that part to be sold to the consumers. Once it has decided what should be done in the matter, the thing is done with precision and certainty. In this respect, too, therefore, a planned economy has definite advantages over a competitive one. In the period before the Great War of 1914-18, no country saved more than 2 or 3 p.c. of the national income. Even in Great Britain, the greatest saver of that age, the total national savings never exceeded 10 p.c. of the annual income. But, in the period 1927-37, the first decade of planned economy in Soviet Russia, her total savings never fell below 20 p.c. and sometimes rose as high as 30 p.c. of the annual income (Webbs. *Soviet Communism*, Vol. II, p. 795). These facts can very well be left to speak for themselves.

Let us now consider the question of the workers' efficiency. In so far as efficiency is governed by the attitude of the worker to his work, the labourer is likely to be more efficient in a planned economy than in a capitalist one. He is buoyed up by the sense that he is working for a good society, which accords him a place of dignity and gives him the definite promise of a full life. And he is not held back by the feeling that he is working for 'the other fellow'. His suggestions are welcome; his criticisms are duly considered; he is a full and equal partner with the manager; and there is no impassable gulf of class prejudice or inequality of power that would separate the one from the other. Besides, there is an elaborate system of consultative committees, wage-fixing tribunals, and arbitration boards, which can give quick and impartial decisions in disputes. In this way, the active, loyal, and continuous co-operation of the workers is enlisted and perfect industrial harmony and peace is established.

VIII

From what we have said above, it will be clear that a planned economy can call into play new incentives to production, which will be more social, more efficient, more human and humanizing than the operative incentives in a capitalist economy. But these new incentives can come into being and gain in vigour only in a congenial environment, which would demand, among other things, (*a*) a powerful, centralized, national Government, based upon the active consent of a majority of the people, (*b*) an equitable distribution of the opportunities for training and work and of wealth and leisure, and (*c*) a centralized direction and control by the State of all economic activities. This last requirement, we should do well to note, would mean a virtual elimination

of the capitalist class as such and as we have known it in the past. There will, of course, be need of men of enterprise and experience in positions of high responsibility, but they will occupy a position similar to that of civil servants in the new State we have in view. Unless these three conditions are fulfilled, a plan cannot enlist for itself universal enthusiasm and active support from all sections of the people, or remove the evils of economic, social, and political inequality, or build up and operate a productive machinery which can produce socially necessary goods or avoid extreme fluctuations of prosperity and depression. It is no use having some sort of a plan; it is necessary to have the right sort of plan, which can give us the results which would be worth while having, because a plan will call for a good deal of sacrifice, discipline, and hard, sustained, and selfless work from every section of the people.

SUBLIMATION OF INSTINCT

By Swami Sharvananda

Modern psychologists are laying much emphasis upon instinct for explanation of human conduct. The educational psychology is trying to reshape the methods of education, making instincts as its main lever. As early as the seventeenth century, it was Descartes who first introduced the word in the psychological sense, while explaining the conduct of animals. He believed that as animals had no intelligence or soul, they acted only by instincts. By instinct he meant vaguely the mere tendency to act in the particular way without any conscious purpose or previous training. But in the case of man, he avowed, all activities were motivated and guided by habit. The same opinion continued to prevail for nearly two centuries or more among the psychologists, until in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Charles Darwin and Lamarck established the biological fact of continuity of life from the animal kingdom to the domain of man. In the eighties of the last century, William James, the father of modern psychology, made it clear, by explanation and experimentation, that instincts are not confined to animals only, but man, too, as their heir, has his due share of them. Nay, if animals have fifteen or sixteen instincts, they get augmented in man to the number twenty-nine. But, however, it was left to McDougall in the beginning of the present century to make a detailed study of the phenomena of instinct. His *Social Psychology* produced a great stir both among the academicians and the general intelligent public. McDougall belongs to the Hormic School of psychology and believes in the existence of a Vital Urge or 'Horme', akin to the *élan vital* of Bergson.

According to McDougall, and it has been accepted by all modern psychologists excepting the Behaviourists, instincts are the natural urge of Life, canalized into different expressions according to the race-habits. So instincts are nothing but race-habits crystallized into certain forms. For instance, the carnivora feel their instinct of combativeness awakened in the presence of certain animals, whereas the herbivora do not. Then again, the different species of herbivora feel their food-seeking instinct awakened only in the presence of certain types of herbs and vegetables and not otherwise. A duckling feels the instinctive tendency of jumping into water at the sight of it, but a chicken would run away from it.

According to McDougall there are fourteen principal instincts and they are active in the whole of animal-world, man and brute included. If we want to deal with them we must reckon with these instincts.

Further, when we come to man and notice these instincts as the chief dynamic forces working from behind, as it were, and propelling him on to different activities in society, we must necessarily pause and study these hidden forces of human nature in order to improve his life.

The chief problem of modern psychology is to determine if these instincts are of fixed nature so that they can neither be eradicated, nor changed, nor improved upon, or there is a possibility of their change and improvement. James held that instincts are transitory and disappear through unuse or formation of certain neural habits. But McDougall does not believe in the ephemerality of instincts, and he supports his view by certain well-conducted experiments. But I think James is right at least partially. Have we not seen animals under domestication and early fostering of certain habits, changing their certain specific tendencies and even instincts? I have seen sheep under training becoming carnivorous, and tiger herbivorous. A cat and a mouse brought up together under domestication, are seen to play together forgetting their instinctive enmity for the time being at least. In the phrase of McDougall, here the 'key' of the mouse fails to 'unlock' the instinct of combativeness in the cat. That shows that these instincts are not eternally fixed tendencies, but a change is possible in them. In the case of man, it is acknowledged on all hands that he has something more than mere instincts to go by. He has intelligence which can and does change the course of life from one of mere impulse like that of brute, into the ordered, moral life where many of the instincts are practically inhibited or controlled.

The common-sense view about man is that ordinarily he lives in three planes—the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual (including moral); and each succeeding plane is considered superior to the foregoing. When we study psychologically the course of evolution of human conduct from almost brute nature of the utter savage to that of the highly ennobled state of a Buddha or a Christ, we cannot fail to notice the curious phenomena of the natural animal instincts of the brute-man getting curbed, controlled, and chastened at every step by a still different dynamic power that manifests itself in human nature. Shri Swami Vivekanandaji gave a very apt name to this evolving dynamic power in man; he called it 'man's higher nature'. Indeed, if instincts move the animal nature of man, it is his higher nature that dominates his moral and spiritual sentiments. The formation of these sentiments is a different story altogether. Even if we do not accept *in toto* the 'inner voice' theory of a certain school of moralists and concede that the growth of intuition is as much a matter of natural evolution and as psychological as the growth of other capacities of mind like intellect, still we are forced to accept from an unbiased and critical study of the lives of great saints and sages, that there are certain psycho-spiritual phenomena, technically called 'sudden-conversions', which make it clear that when we speak of instincts and sentiments, all has not been said of the inner nature of man. There are evidently certain hidden springs of forces in man which are more potent than even his animal instincts; and when these forces are stimulated and brought to bear upon his conduct, even the instincts can be arrested, changed, and sublimated. In fact the whole course of practical spirituality, which we Hindus generally designate by the common appellation, Yoga, has the one end in view, which is the liberation of the pure consciousness of the Spirit or *Chit* through sublimation of instincts.

According to Vedanta, the pure nature of *Âtman* can never be realized, unless the mind is purified and its vagaries calmed; but this cannot be achieved until the instincts are sublimated. So the sublimation of instincts is of utmost importance for practical religion and also for the higher civilization of man.

Now, when we go to deal with the problem directly on practical basis, we find the whole of the present knowledge of human psychology is perfectly inadequate to help us, and we are forced to seek help either from religious faith or from pure metaphysics, even as William James was forced to recognize the existence of soul as a metaphysical principle which is beyond the pale of psychology, yet none the less determinant of the psychological functions like 'selective activities.' Even McDougall's Horme is at best a metaphysical principle. Our Vedanta accepts Horme or the Cosmic *Prâna* of McDougall, *Hiranyagarbha* or Soul (mind, both Cosmic and individual) of James and goes even beyond. It posits the existence of another principle which is more remote and more fundamental than both Horme and Soul—it is the *Âtman* or the transcendental Principle of Intelligence or Consciousness. It is the assertion of this pure spiritual principle of *Âtman* upon mind that can produce wonderful change in man's conduct and sublimate his instincts.

Shri Ramakrishna, with the insight of a true practical psychologist, gives us a recipe for the sublimation of instincts. The most powerful instincts in man which often stand in his way of higher development, are the instincts of self-assertion, acquisitiveness, combativeness, and sex. Shri Ramakrishna tells us that these instincts can very well be sublimated and made a good aid to our spiritual life instead of becoming impediments, if we direct them Godwards. For instance, the instinct of self-assertion which is the chief source of half of the troubles man is suffering from today, can very well be sublimated if we train ourselves to assert not the lower, little individual self, but either the higher spiritual Self, the *Âtman*, or the humble self of a devotee wholly dependent upon the Lord. The instinct of acquisitiveness which is generally the main cause of man's moral degradation, be it in the form of small pilfering or in the grand form of imperial conquest, can very well be sublimated, if we direct it towards the acquirement not of mundane wealth, but of graces of head and heart and of the Spirit. The instinct of combativeness which is responsible for the terrible carnage the world is witnessing today, in the present war, can also be sublimated and converted into a great force for human benefaction, if we direct it not towards external enemies, but against our own evil propensities which are our real moral foes, and also against all other spiritual impediments, and fight them out to finish. The sex instinct is one of the strongest of forces both for building and disrupting the peace and happiness of human society. The tendency in modern age is more towards disruption and sexual revelry. This instinct, too, can be sublimated by directing the emotion towards God. It is a common practice in different religions to adopt God as a father, mother, friend, lover, beloved, and in fact in every conceivable human relationship, so that the sexual emotion can be easily directed towards Him and the instinct be sublimated. Here we see the whole phenomena of Freudian theory of homo-sexuality and hetero-sexuality in operation, but it gets sublimated and chastened by going through the process.

According to Patanjali, the greatest exponent of the Yogic school, the best method for the sublimation of instinct and all baser tendencies in general, is to practise the opposite virtue. He calls it *pratipaksha-bhâvanâ*. By this method the Hormic energy which ordinarily tends to flow through the usual channel of instincts, gets diverted

towards other ends through opposite paths. Thus the instincts get either sublimated or wholly inhibited owing to lack of energy. In practical life this method is found to be comparatively easy to practise and also highly effective in its result.

But Shri Shankaracharya, the renowned exponent of the Advaita Vedanta, gives us a far more sublime and radical method for the chastening of instincts. In fact, he wants to sublimate the whole of mind itself which he calls *mano-nâsha* and *mano-jaya*. He asserts that by constant contemplation of the pure *Âtman* the ordinary instincts of mind get weakened and sublimated, inasmuch as the very mind gets illumined by the higher light of the *Âtman* and the values of ordinary sense-life undergo a radical change. The whole world stands transfigured and devaluated before its enlightened gaze. Hence no extra effort is necessary for the sublimation of instincts. If one simply contemplates deeply upon the pure nature of the *Âtman*, by virtue of that meditation alone his vulgar nature, including all its instincts, would get sublimated into a radiant mind reflecting the effulgence of the pure Spirit.

So we see that the modern psychologist is perfectly right in his assertion that none of the instincts can be killed or destroyed in ordinary life. But it is equally true that these instincts can be chastened, purified, or sublimated by bringing a higher spiritual force, which man possesses in him, to bear upon his thought and action. This higher force may not be within the purview of modern psychology, still its existence is manifest through the moral and spiritual nature of man. And the more he can bring this spiritual force, the *Âtma-shakti* or *Âtma-jnâna* to bear upon his life of thought and action, the higher will he ascend in the ladder of life. The modern human society is suffering sorely from the maladjustments of these instincts and it is of utmost importance for it that the modern generation should take lessons from the saints and sages for the sublimation of instincts and improve the general life of man.

THE PASSING OF A CIVILIZATION

By Prof. L. N. Ajwani

The World War II is hastening to its end, and astrologers and politicians are busy predicting the date on which Germany will capitulate. But it is by no means sure that the cessation of hostilities will usher in an era of goodwill and freedom, and it is even likely that peace may be only a period of lull between two great wars. There is no change of heart in the dominant races of mankind and the greed and selfishness, hate and pride, which brought about World War I and World War II, stalk the world as before. Suffering humanity looks in vain for deliverance.

The thing is, a once glorious civilization is burning itself out and we are witnessing the glow and bearing the heat of a great conflagration. This civilization took its rise in Europe five centuries ago, reached its apex in the nineteenth century, and is hastening to its destruction in our time. It may take some years, even decades, before this civilization becomes extinct, but that is only natural. The tail of a comet is larger than the head and may be visible when the head is nowhere. Aurangzeb died in 1707, and within thirty-two years of his death the Mogul Empire was gone and the Mogul Emperor was a puppet and prisoner. But

for over another hundred years a Mogul Emperor went on issuing ridiculous *firmans* and dispensing high-sounding titles. This civilization—which for want of a better title may be called the Renaissance civilization—too, may continue to charm and even dazzle the undiscerning for a good many years to come, but its hour has struck. It is doomed.

It was a great and glorious civilization in its day, glowing and dynamic. Only, its basis was extremely narrow and shaky. It took its rise with the discovery of sea-routes by the nations of Europe and the advent of the 'sea-age.' A corner of Eurasia suddenly found itself more important and powerful than all the rest of the world, and a little island at the extreme corner of this territory by becoming the 'Mistress of the Seas' became the proud possessor of one-fourth of the globe. The motto of Europe and Europeans was the same as that of the nineteenth-century poet who sang, 'Better a hundred years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.' The Europe of the Renaissance civilization felt that it had a divine mission to colonize and conquer the rest of the world, and it went about its work with a coolness, strategy, and thoroughness never before seen in the history of civilizations. Whole continents were devastated with fire and sword in order that the people of Europe and their descendants should become rich and prosperous. The most wonderful achievement of this civilization was that it succeeded in hypnotizing conquered peoples to believe that they were ignorant and uncivilized before the Europeans took them in hand, and that beneficent Providence had brought the white men of Europe to their benighted lands to teach them art and culture, morality and religion. Descendants of men whose perfect drainage system can be seen in the ruins of Mohen-Jo Daro were led to believe that the rudiments of hygiene and sanitation were learnt by them from the soap-loving Englishman, and men whose forefathers lighted the torch of learning in all the departments of knowledge received with humility the complacent utterance of Macaulay that a shelf of a good European library was worth all the literature ever produced in Asia. There are few things more amazing in the history of mankind than this that the legend of the natural superiority of the white *sahib* over the coloured man should have taken hold so soon and so completely of the conquered peoples who with a little thought and reading could have realized that for thousands of years they had been cultured and civilized when Europe was in darkness and when England was not even a name, much less a nation. However, this amazing thing did happen, and for at least two hundred years the European and his descendant—the American and the Australian—have had the world at their feet and all the good things of this world ready for their picking.

The 'sea-age' is coming to an end, the 'air-age' is advancing, and the scattered world divided by great oceans is pictured as 'one world' in the new maps made to show the air-routes of the future. In this new 'one world' the power and prestige of Europe are bound to wane. It will no longer be possible for the world to ignore completely half the mankind that lives huddled in China and India and to pay more consideration to a street accident in London or New York than to a million-people-dying-famine in Asia or Africa. The World War II has made it clear that even as a fighter the non-white is by no means inferior to the white man, and as the capacity (or art) for War is of the essence of the civilization of the Renaissance, the myth of the white man's superiority will not now govern the imaginations and actions of hundreds of millions of the non-whites. The Renaissance civilization is based on the exploitation of the coloured races by the whites of Europe and men of European descent, and as soon as

this exploitation is rendered impossible or even difficult, this civilization will be sapped of its strength and may cease to be. What they call 'geo-politics' is going to be the end of the five hundred years' suzerainty of Europe. The two World Wars have removed from the minds of the subject races all previous impressions about the innate goodness, chivalry, virtue, or morality of their white masters, and, though for some time the unarmed non-whites must continue to take orders from the white rulers, ultimately this domination must disappear. One set of men can be governed by another only when the former honestly feel the moral superiority of the latter.

This is not to deny the shining merit of the Renaissance civilization which consisted in giving to man as man and woman as woman a dignity and means of self-expression not dreamt of in any other civilization. Shakespeare, the greatest writer in the five hundred years of this civilization, is an outstanding example. He has no thought of heaven or hell or of chivalry or religion, he does not concern himself with saints and devils or allegorical representations of virtue and vice; his sole thought is to portray man as man and woman as woman as each moves in this everyday visible world. There is nothing super-terrestrial in Shakespeare, and there is nothing super-terrestrial in the Renaissance civilization. Other civilizations regarded man's earthly existence as a pilgrimage or as only one incident in a drama whose beginning was elsewhere and end nowhere in sight. The Renaissance civilization could not or would not extend its gaze beyond the confines of man's birth and death; but within these limits its gaze was searching and profound. And there was to be no distinction between men and women in the free and full development of their powers, capacities, and enjoyments. Life was for the purpose of living, and living meant striving, fighting, inventing, and enjoying endlessly. Each individual was to have the fullest opportunity for pushing himself to the front by any means he could employ! And if the weakest went to the wall, there was to be no weeping or regrets. After all, he had his chance like any other man, or if he had had no adequate opportunities he was to blame himself and the bed in which he happened to be born. No God or outside agency need be brought in. Other civilizations might have laid emphasis on renunciation, but this civilization severely cut out poverty and renunciation and such foolish ideals: in the dictionary of this civilization there was no term so opprobrious as that of 'beggar'. This civilization had crimes but no sins in its calendar; the only sin a man, perhaps, committed was when he broke the commandment: 'Thou shalt not be found out.'

The threefold aim of this civilization was the extension of man's sway over Nature, the accumulation of materials, and the complexity of life. The man who collected a ton of furniture to take an ounce of bread in his mouth was *ipso facto* more civilized than his neighbour who dispensed with the extra equipment and ritual and plunged straight into the business of eating. The man who was not smart enough to invent more and more pleasures or more and varied means and instruments of gratifying the senses was the man to be pitied and prayed for. Science and sensation were the watchwords of this civilization, and the man who had no scientific bent of mind and who had no 'dope' and advertising capacity in him had no chance of preferment and distinction. The highest product of this civilization was the man (or the nation) who by inventing the most terrific weapons of destruction and employing the most powerful propaganda was able to keep down others under his sway and plunge into sadistic revels of enjoyment.

Man cannot, however, live by bread alone or by material enjoyments and comforts. Man is not only body; he

has a spirit, a soul which needs other food or sustenance than that which scientific inventions can supply. And even the ordinary bread has a trick of becoming scarcer day by day as competition becomes keener and keener and men become more and more scientific in their way of life. A civilization that encourages every individual to put forth his maximum energy for self-aggrandizement, self-enjoyment, and self-expression must find itself involved ultimately in a jungle from which no extrication or escape is possible.

The civilized nations of the world just now find themselves tangled in a jungle or labyrinth from which no avenue or opening is visible. They are engaged in a suicidal struggle which may mean the end and destruction of the victorious as well as the defeated. The clash of arms may cease for a while, the din quieten down, but there will be no real peace, there can be no hope for this civilization, unless it broadens its narrow basis and aims at something else besides conquest of Nature and gratification of the senses. There seems to be, however, no sign yet of any of these things on the most distant horizon.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To our Readers

The eminent writers in the present issue hardly need any introduction. Principal Lakshman Sarup of Lahore is well known for his profound Sanskrit scholarship. . . . St. Nihal Singh wrote his article originally for the 'Golden Jubilee' number of the *Prabuddha Bharata*, plans for which have to be dropped for the time being owing to the paper control order of the Government. . . . Prof. H. L. Dey is the Head of the Department of Economics in the Dacca University. . . . Prof. L. N. Ajwani of Karachi has earned a name for his study of the fundamentals of Indian culture.

Interpenetration of purposes

Writing in the *Life* of April, Prof. William Ernest Hocking shows how, according to the American point of view, an equitable and lasting peace can be ensured. Philosophers are ridiculed as idealists while politicians boast of their realism. Hocking has, therefore, to show first that these two views can be reconciled from a higher standpoint where thought becomes not only idealistic, but realistic too; for true thought can never lose touch with either. Realism pre-supposes the possession of a positive policy and not mere drifting:

> In simplest terms, to have a positive policy is to make history instead of letting history happen to us or trying to fend it off. . . . To have a positive policy is to have an idea of what kind of world we prefer and to work for that kind of world. It follows as a matter of course that if you have no ideas you can have no positive policy. And that if you have no faith in purpose nor in yourself you can have no positive policy. . . . It is the aim beyond victory which alone justifies the fighting. To have no such aim suggests a mental and moral vacuum not creditable, and hardly credible, in a great people.

Expansion as an idea in international relationship has come to stay; but unfortunately it is found associated with war. The duty of practical philosophers is to reconcile expansion with peace and prosperity all around—and in this lies the future peace according to Hocking's conception. He argues:

> Each state, in terms of its political concern and influence, tends to be everywhere. . . . Foreign policy is necessary because the activities of states overflow their borders. They have always done so; they do so now with increasing range and tempo.

Political imperialism grows as a consequence, and there follows open or 'under-cover' warfare:

> This is the great and traditional game of foreign policy whose essence is under-cover warfare and whose stakes are the inchings

up or down of the lives of nations. Current 'realism' accepts this picture.

A more realistic realism has to recognize the need of 'interpenetration' of interests in future international relationships.

Is it conceivable that political expansions might also interpenetrate like waves, rather than collide like billiard balls? . . . The time has now come when the mutual intrusions of political wills are so widespread that a policy of interpenetrating purposes has become essential to world peace. . . . Every nation has a duty to shape its economic policies so that their impact on other nations shall be useful to both. . . . The explosive factor in history is not suffering; it is indifference to suffering on the part of the non-suffering. . . . he who thinks for two has a bigger job than he who thinks for himself alone. And he is the only genuine realist; for he alone sees things as they are. . . . As no man can be the property of any other man, so no nation can be the property of any other nation.

It is all very good so far as it goes. But 'interpenetration of purposes', though it is a new and useful category in international thinking, is by no means either the most idal od real of relationships. Given an unfair start, the purposes of weaker nations cannot be effective, and the economic selfishness of stronger nations cannot stop short of the fullest satisfaction. In fact, interpenetration of purposes may mean only economic imperialism. Hocking speaks only in terms of an enlightened economic policy of 'live and let live', but he does not provide for ultimate equality. Thus in trying to be a realist, he ceases to be an idealist. The League of Nations, on which he banks for the future, may not be less at the back and call of the bigger Powers than it has hitherto been.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

HINDUISM AT A GLANCE. By Swami Nirvedananda. With a Foreword by Sir S. Radhakrishnan. *To be had of the Model Publishing House, 2A, Shamacharan De St., Calcutta. Pp. 229. Price Rs. 4-8 As.*

In the Foreword Sir Sarvapalli writes: 'It is the author's conviction, which I share, that the essential principles of Hinduism have nothing to fear from any advance in scientific knowledge or historic criticism. In this small book which is directed not to the specialist, although based on specialized knowledge, but to the general educated reader, the author gives us a clear and precise account of the fundamental categories of Hindu thought. He has the gift of imparting information as if he were acquiring it. To my mind this book is an excellent introduction to the study of Hindu religion.'

The world feels the need of a dependable guide through the apparent mazes of Hindu thought, and the volume under review removes that want by presenting within a short compass, and in a lucid and interesting way, correct and valuable information regarding the fundamental ideas and ideals of this age-old religion. The long glossary and index are useful and instructive.

The get-up is the best that can be expected under war conditions.

MEDICINE FOR THE MASSES IN INDIA. By An Amateur Doctor. *W. S. Hitchcock, I.P. (Rtd.), P.O. Hatia, Ranchi. Pp. 20.*

In this booklet, the author, a retired Government officer, sets down his experiences in endeavouring to administer simple medical treatment to the masses in rural areas in India. Though medical practice of a high order obtains in India, it is to be regretted that free and timely medical aid is not available to the masses of India who are generally poor and live in villages in the interior. The practical suggestions put forward by the author, who has been running what he calls 'an amateur dispensary' are valuable, and may be taken up with profit by workers devoted to the uplift of the rural population.

SANSKRIT-ENGLISH

SELECT WORKS OF SANKARACHARYA. (3rd Edition). *Published by G. A. Natesan and Co., Madras. Pp. 256. Price Re. 1-4 As.*

In its third edition, the book under review, which contains the text in Sanskrit with English translation, has been revised and enlarged by the addition of some miscellaneous Stotras from Shankara's compositions.